

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Interview with Cuban general

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VOL. 60/NO. 2 JANUARY 15, 1996

Bipartisan consensus growing for war drive

Military build up aimed at Yugoslav workers

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

As the year turned, Washington's imperial armies rolled into Bosnia. The steady military buildup and growing bipartisan consensus among the U.S. rulers over the goals of the largest military operation in Europe since World War II are the latest escalation of NATO's war drive against the Yugoslav workers and peasants.

The 60,000-strong NATO occupation force in Bosnia will supposedly enforce a "peace plan" rammed down the throats of the warring parties in Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia by the Clinton administration in November. These officials

FIGHT NATO'S WAR DRIVE — SEE EDITORIAL ON PAGE 14

were kept on a U.S. military base in Dayton, Ohio, until they declared their agreement with the proposals crafted by the White House.

But the goal of the invading capitalist powers is to overthrow the workers state in Yugoslavia — to stamp out once and for all the gains of the massive popular revolution that swept that country in the 1940s and became a "festival of the oppressed" for millions in the Balkans and around the world. The imperialists in Washington, Bonn, Paris, and London will try to reestablish capitalism there.

On December 31, U.S. army engineers completed the construction of a 500-ton pontoon bridge, which stretched more than 650 yards from Croatia to the northeastern Bosnian town of Orasje. About 150 tanks, Humvee military vehicles, artillery pieces, and 436 troops have already rolled across the swollen Sava River on the structure,

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U.S. troops and tanks cross Sava River into Bosnia

Hundreds march in Boston to say, 'Keep abortion safe, legal, available'

BY MARY NELL BOCKMAN

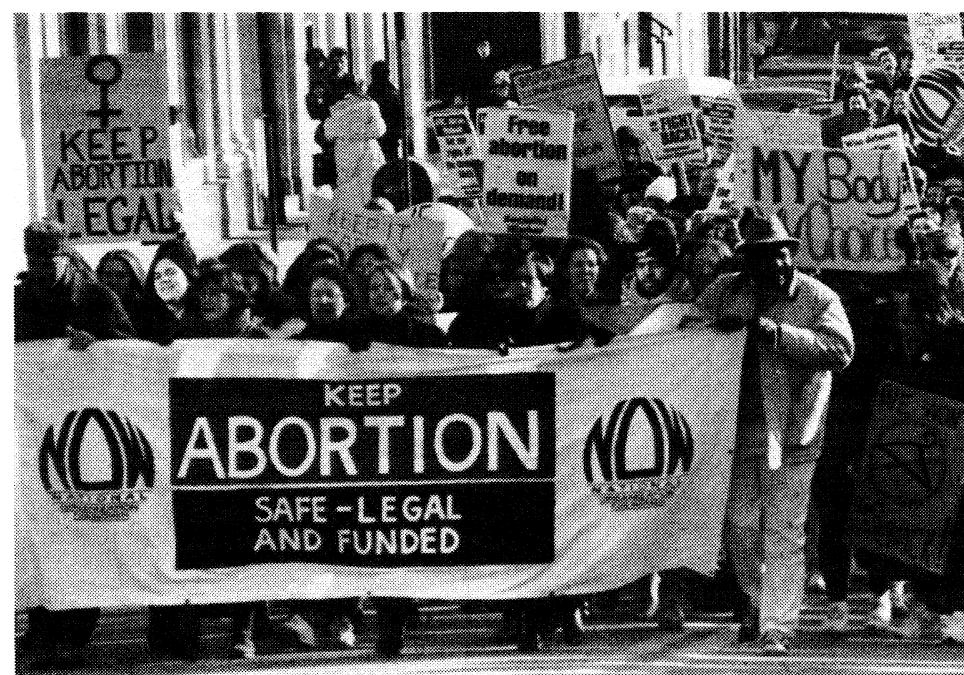
BOSTON — Seven hundred supporters of abortion rights marched through downtown Boston December 30 to mark the first anniversary of the shootings at two women's health clinics in nearby Brookline that left two workers dead and five others injured.

"Keep abortion safe, legal, and available," read the lead banner. Most motorists and passersby greeted the protesters with approving honks and cheers as the march made its way past the State Capitol to the Arlington Street Church for a rally. The action was sponsored by the Massachusetts National Organization for Women (NOW).

Marchers carried placards with the names of clinic workers and doctors assaulted by right-wing terrorists around the country. Some wore smocks identifying them as clinic escorts — volunteers who accompany patients to the facilities and counter harassment from antiabortion demonstrators.

Several dozen students from six area high schools marched with signs and banners from women's rights groups in their schools. One such contingent was Students Advocating Gender Equality, a group at Newton North High School started in response to the shootings.

A short rally at the assembly point included speakers from the Young Feminist Task Force of NOW, the Massachusetts Abortion Rights Action League, the Gay



Demonstration marked one-year anniversary of killings by antiabortion rightists

and Lesbian Political Caucus, and the Young Socialists.

Ellen Convisser, former president of Massachusetts NOW, opened the final rally after the march, reminding everyone of the response to the clinic murders last year. "Hundreds gathered at the clinics that afternoon," she said. "Thousands ral-

lied at the capitol the next day. And the following week, hundreds of courageous men and women went out to the clinics to show their support.

"Each shooting, each bombing, each arson is not inevitable," Convisser continued. "Many government officials have

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*Mark Curtis
supporters
respond to
new round
of slanders*

BY JOHN STUDER

DES MOINES, Iowa — "Parole stirs concerns. Parents hope girl's attacker stays away." This was the headline on the front page of the Metro section of the December 22 *Des Moines Register*.

The article, written by *Register* crime reporter Tom Alex, who maintains offices both at the newspaper and at the Des Moines police department, repeats the police frame-up case against union and political activist Mark Curtis.

The article is written in the form of an interview with Keith Morris, an area small businessman who is the father of the young Black woman Curtis was framed up on charges of attempting to rape. Since Curtis was arrested in 1988, Morris has collaborated with the police, parole authorities, and political forces supporting the cop frame-up in their attempt to make the prosecution's case plausible and to keep Curtis behind bars.

A prominent six-inch-by-eight-inch picture of Morris is displayed

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*Local fights
continue in
France after
strike wave*

BY KATY LEROUGETEL
AND HARVEY McARTHUR

MARSEILLE, France — In the wake of the strike wave and other protests against government austerity plans that swept France for much of December, workers here continue several local walkouts.

The nationwide strikes — led by a rail workers walkout — and the demonstrations that drew millions of unionists and youth into the streets forced the government to back off from attacks on rail workers and cuts in the retirement plans for public employees.

Under pressure from these actions, French prime minister Alain Juppé convened a "social summit" with top union officials and the employers association at the end of December. Participants announced no agreement, however.

Juppé insisted on further austerity measures and refused to postpone an increase in social security taxes set to go into effect in January.

"Financial markets applauded after Prime Minister Alain Juppé held firm to his program of French deficit reduction at a summit with labor leaders and employers," noted the *International Herald Tribune* December 23. "But most French leaders say bolder initiatives are needed to jolt the nation out of its mood of uncertainty and pervasive gloom."

Local strikes continuing late into December included postal workers in Caen (see accompanying article) and transit

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Activists protest Iowa bookstore burning

BY BILL KALMAN

DES MOINES, Iowa — "Local Political Center Victim Of Arson" read the front-page headline of the December 28 *Communicator*. The newspaper is published five days a week and circulated primarily in the Black community in Des Moines and other cities in Iowa. Under the headline, the paper ran a photo showing the heavily damaged storefront.

"The Pathfinder Bookstore here was the victim of a serious arson attack in the early morning hours of December 18," the article by John Studer stated.

"The Pathfinder Bookstore has become a well-known political center in Des Moines," it said. "Two nights before the fire, the Militant Labor Forum, which holds weekly forums at the bookstore, had organized a panel discussion opposing the sending of U.S. troops to Bosnia."

"The Mark Curtis Defense Committee," which has its headquarters in the bookstore, the article continued, "sponsored a highly publicized meeting at a downtown hotel the night before the attack to celebrate the recent decision of the Iowa State Board of Parole to grant parole to Curtis. The meeting was covered by Des Moines channel 13, the local NBC affiliate."

"This cowardly act was clearly a politically motivated act, an attempt to intimidate those who organize to speak out against injustice and in defense of workers' rights," the article quoted bookstore manager John Cox saying.

Supporters of Pathfinder and democratic rights have been working to publicize the attack, put pressure on city authorities to investigate and catch those responsible, and to fix the bookstore up.

The local daily newspaper, the *Des Moines Register*, has carried minimal coverage of the campaign being waged by bookstore supporters against the book burners. The paper did not send a reporter to cover a December 19 press conference convened by bookstore volunteers and representatives of a number of other area groups who came to deplore the attack and call for police action. After materials from the meeting and press conference were faxed to the paper, the *Register* ran a small article quoting a police official saying the investigation into the fire was still open.

On December 23, volunteers gathered at the bookstore to begin to clean up and



Militant/Shirley Peña (left), John Studer (right)

Arson attack damaged front of Des Moines Pathfinder bookstore. At right, volunteers mobilize December 23 to clean up and repair the shop.

repair the damage from the arson attack. Members of the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialists, which have offices in the store; activists from the Mark Curtis Defense Committee; and others rolled up their sleeves to help in the cleanup effort.

Volunteers washed the bookstore windows, cleaned each book individually, wiped down the walls, placed odor-eating strips along the ceiling, wiped down all the office equipment, cleaned the furniture and bookshelves, and steam-cleaned the

rug.

The next day — with a cooked ham, refreshments, and blinking holiday lights in the front window — bookstore supporters opened up shop for a combination open house and book sale. Supporters from across Iowa, Nebraska, and Illinois — ranging from IBP packinghouse workers to former Firestone strikers — stopped by to stand in support of democratic rights and the free exchange of political ideas.

After everyone ate, Shirley Peña addressed the crowd on behalf of the book-

store. "The only insurance we have against future attacks is to keep the heat on the city to force them to conduct a thorough investigation to catch and prosecute those individuals responsible for this criminal attack," Peña said.

"We are asking all supporters of democratic rights to send a message to Arthur Davis, mayor of Des Moines, demanding that the city act to send a clear message to book burners that their cowardly attack will not go unpunished," she said.

Peña also publicly thanked the former Firestone striker who first notified bookstore volunteers of the fire after hearing about it over his police scanner. In appreciation, the bookstore presented the unionist with a 12-month Pathfinder Readers Club membership and a copy of the magazine *New International*.

In a demonstration of the way the bookstore is viewed as a political center by many beyond those who volunteer to staff it, one Guatemalan packinghouse worker from Perry, Iowa, thanked the Firestone striker for "saving our bookstore."

Peña asked those in attendance to join in circulating a fact sheet on the attack, which is available in both Spanish and English. She announced a special campaign to raise \$2,500 for clean-up and replacement of damaged stock.

Since the December 18 attack, the bookstore has taken in \$170 in donations for repairs and stock and \$603 from sales of smoke-damaged books.

Messages urging police action to catch and prosecute those responsible for the arson attack should be addressed to Mayor Arthur Davis, 400 East First Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50309.

Protests halt transfer of Peltier; more letters needed to support parole effort

BY REBECCA GETTLEMAN

DES MOINES, Iowa — After receiving thousands of protest letters, U.S. prison authorities abandoned plans to transfer Native American leader Leonard Peltier to a federal penitentiary in Atlanta. The Leonard Peltier Defense Committee sent a fax to supporters December 23 thanking

those who sent letters and urging continued backing for the framed-up activist's effort to win parole.

Shortly after attending a parole hearing on December 11, Peltier was abruptly transferred from the Leavenworth, Kansas, penitentiary to Oklahoma City. Peltier is serving two life sentences on frame-up charges of murdering two FBI agents. The move came as a surprise to Peltier and his supporters. After the transfer, federal authorities told Peltier he was being moved to the Atlanta prison.

Peltier's supporters were concerned both about the reputation of the prison in Atlanta, which they described as "a dangerous institution well known for outbreaks of violence," and about Peltier being moved so far from his defense committee. The defense committee called for letters to be sent to the warden in Atlanta letting him know he would be held accountable for Peltier's safety.

Prison authorities subsequently decided to transfer the activist to a medical facility in Springfield, Missouri, where he will be able to receive long-needed medical care.

In a statement faxed to supporters around the world, the Peltier defense committee wrote, "We are very pleased with Leonard Peltier's current situation."

The fax went on to state, "We must stress the importance of sending letters of support to the U.S. Parole Commission. This is the best chance Leonard has had in a long time!"

Letters urging parole for Peltier can be sent to the U.S. Parole Commission at 5550 Friendship Blvd., Suite 420, Chevy Chase, MD 20815; Fax (301) 492-6694.

To write or send gifts showing support, Peltier's address in prison is:

Leonard Peltier, #89637-132
Springfield Medical Facility
1900 W. Sunshine
P.O. Box 4000
Springfield, MO 65808

Items that can be sent include soft cover books, photographs (no Polaroid's), and postal money orders (for phone calls, stamps, paper, etc.). For more information contact the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee, Box 583, Lawrence, KS 66044. Tel: (913) 842-5774.

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THE MILITANT

What's up in the Balkans?



U.S. airmen training Turkish soldiers

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Washington presses ahead on war drive

which is designed to carry enormous loads.

It is the largest such bridge the U.S. military has built since World War II. Army engineers will soon begin building a second pontoon bridge to allow two-way traffic.

The bulk of Washington's 20,000 troops that will occupy northeastern Bosnia are invading the republic over these sections of steel and aluminum. Most of the 2,000 U.S. troops already in Bosnia flew into the airbase in Tuzla.

The U.S. military's first casualty occurred December 30 when a GI was wounded after his vehicle hit an anti-tank land mine in Bosnia. United Nations officials estimated that between 3 million and 6 million land mines have been set in Bosnia during the three-and-a-half-year war there.

More casualties appear likely as imperialist forces begin to place their soldiers into numerous towns and villages. British troops have already taken over an abandoned factory in the Bosnian town of Kupres. Military police have begun directing traffic and checking identifications.

"This is the vanguard, the first such project in the theater," said Col. Timothy Cross, commander of the logistics operation for the British occupation force. Cross and other British soldiers arrived in Kupres December 29.

"Kupres is a key spot," Cross stated. "We will bring all our heavy armor through here. This will be a major logistics base." Describing what's in store for Kupres from the NATO "peacekeeping" mission, the *New York Times* noted the town's "bridges and roads may crumble as 70-ton Chieftain tanks and 155-millimeter guns begin roaming the countryside" and soldiers will "drain electricity and water supplies."

Ready to do battle

According to the *Washington Post*, the GIs while "remain[ing] ready to do battle," will "actively patrol their sector," and seldom travel in packs of "fewer than four armored vehicles." The U.S. military base in Tuzla will be guarded by forces from the 325th Parachute Infantry Regiment, including nine rifle platoons, five antitank platoons, a scout platoon and six howitzers — a total of 800 troops. Washington is also sending tanks and Apache helicopters.

Such massive firepower has bolstered the imperial arrogance among Washington's military brass on the scene. "U.S. Brings to Bosnia Tactics That Tamed Wild West" was the headline of an article in the December 27 *Wall Street Journal* describing the U.S. bullying approach.

"When Brig. Gen. Patrick O'Neal, commander of the U.S. troops in this area, first stepped off a Sava River ferryboat onto Bosnian ground, a local militiaman blocked his way and demanded his passport," the *Journal* article said.

"The American general pointed at one of his soldiers' M-16 automatic rifles. 'That's our passport,' he said softly, walking past the militiaman and up the river bank into Bosnia."

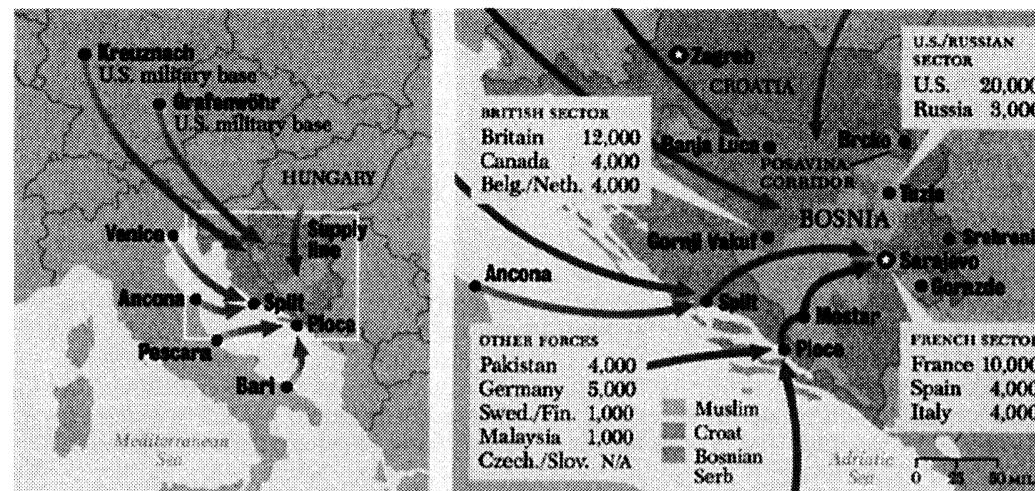
"The U.S. Army is coming to the Balkans big, slow, and uncompromising — like John Wayne or Errol Flynn in an old western movie."

According to this article, Col. Gregory Fontenot, commander of U.S. troops in the Posavina Corridor in northeastern Bosnia, ordered his troops to adopt an "I'll kick your a— if you f— with me" look."

Fontenot set up an initial checkpoint that includes six Bradley Fighting Vehicles in territory held by Belgrade-backed forces. The soldiers moved into the village of Lepnica December 26, establishing Washington's first military deployment in the Bosnian countryside.

The Posavina Corridor was bitterly contested at the Dayton Ohio negotiations and during the war between Bosnian troops and forces led by chauvinist Serb leader Radovan Karadzic.

"I consider this Indian Country," declared Fontenot, in reference to Bosnia. When told such arrogant posturing was unduly provocative, Fontenot responded, "Tough s—." According to the *Journal*, one of Fontenot's sergeants hinted to an F-16 fighter pilot flying nearby that he bomb a Bosnian Serb commander's house



Map shows military blueprint partitioning Bosnia into three imperialist sectors led by Washington, Paris, and London. The plan calls for the NATO occupation force of 60,000 troops to be in place 90 days after the treaty was signed.

when the pilot asked him, "You got any targets for us to practice on?"

Further exposing the rampant racism among the U.S. officer corps, Fontenot told two Black GIs, "It'll be interesting to hear what you two see, because the Croatians are racists... They kill people for the color of their skins."

Making it clear that the target of the U.S. army is Yugoslav working people of all nationalities, the *Journal* article continued, "The U.S. Army believes that the greatest threat to its mission here will come from the Bosnian Muslims, because that faction already has won the battle for world public opinion, and so will be less inclined to meet the requirements of the peace treaty."

Fontenot's statements apparently went a little too far in explaining the attitude of the Pentagon in the Balkans. The *New York Times* quoted a Clinton administration official the next day who said Fontenot's remarks "represent bad judgment, extremely bad judgment."

Long-term, growing military presence

Almost everyone involved in the conflict thinks the NATO military operation will stay in Yugoslavia long past the 12-month deadline declared by U.S. president Bill Clinton. "I don't think we're out of here in 12 months, not if we want this thing to work," Fontenot told the *Journal*. "Maybe not in groups of 20,000 but I think we'll have a military presence here for a long, long time."

Washington is also moving to significantly expand its operations in Bosnia beyond the northeast sector that is supposedly its focus. Lt. Gen. Michael Walker, British commander of NATO ground forces in Bosnia, asked in mid-December that the U.S. military install two radar systems in Sarajevo, which falls within the French-occupied sector. Washington, Paris, and London have formally divided Bosnia into three sectors that each is supposed to control. The move reveals the U.S. government's ability to elbow Paris aside in the imperialist war drive dubbed "Operation Joint Endeavor."

French government officials continue to yelp at Washington's dominant role in NATO, reflecting increased friction between the two governments. "For France, it's not a question, as in the 1950s, of rejoining a chain of command totally controlled by the United States," said French defense minister Charles Millon in late December, in reference to Paris's recent decision to rejoin the military wing of NATO. "It is clear that an operation in Haiti should rest on the American pillar, but in the case of an operation in Bosnia, it's the European pillar that should dominate," he insisted.

The Dayton accord dictated by Washington pledges national elections within nine months and calls for the withdrawal of Bosnian army and Belgrade-backed Serb forces from front-line positions in Sarajevo.

According to press reports, these forces withdrew from their front-line positions in Sarajevo December 28. The *New York Times* reported that military forces from France and Britain have bulldozed some checkpoints in their zones.

Maj. John Suttle, a U.S. military spokesman, told the *Times* that Maj. Gen. William Nash, commander of U.S. forces in NATO, warned all the forces in Yugoslavia that he expects full freedom of

Meanwhile, Moscow, which has contributed military personnel to the conflict to back up Belgrade, its long-time ally, continues to be wracked by political turmoil. Increasingly, politicians in and outside the Russian parliament have begun to openly attack president Boris Yeltsin for the humiliating move of placing Russian troops in Bosnia under NATO command.

The December 17 parliamentary elections in Russia registered a resurgence of Stalinist and nationalist forces. Gennadi Zyuganov's Communist Party came in first with 22 percent of the vote. The Liberal Democratic Party led by ultrarightist Vladimir Zhirinovsky got 11 percent of the votes cast. Our Home Is Russia party, led by Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, received 10 percent of the votes.

The *Times* called the balloting results a "personal humiliation" for Russian president Yeltsin on whom the White House has put its hopes on driving Russia closer to the fold of the world capitalist market. "It certainly doesn't hearten those of us who believe in democracy and reform," lamented State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns at a December 18 press conference.

Another Bonapartist figure, former General Aleksandr Lebed, announced December 28 that he was running for president next June. Lebed calls for the restoration of the Soviet Union and has vowed to fight against the expansion of NATO.

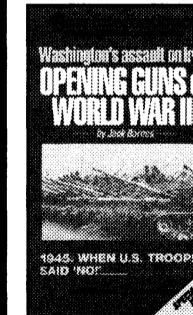
"Communists blamed as telecom deal collapses," was the front-page headline of the December 27 *Financial Times*. The article lamented the withdrawal of an Italian investor from one of the largest "foreign investment deals." The deal was supposed to lead to privatization of a major Russian telephone company. "The last minute withdrawal," the *Times* complained, "renewed doubts about the country's shaky privatization drive."

At the same time, Moscow remains embroiled in a nationalist conflict with Chechen independence fighters. Russian troops recaptured Gudermes in late December, the second largest town in Chechnya. Fierce battles erupted between Russian soldiers and Chechen rebels who seized the railway station and other buildings on December 14 in an attempt to disrupt the elections.

The Russian commander, Gen. Anatoly Shkirko told the ITAR-Tass news agency that almost 600 people had been killed in the fighting. More than 20,000 people have been slaughtered since Moscow sent an invasion force in Dec. 1994 to crush the Chechens' struggle for independence.

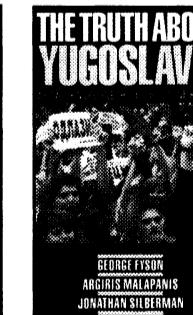
BOOKS FOR WORKING-CLASS CAMPAIGN AGAINST WAR DRIVE

Pathfinder publishes a number of books and pamphlets that are valuable weapons for working people opposed to the imperialists' march toward war in Yugoslavia. Below is a selection of titles documenting earlier opposition to imperialist war, battles to defend unions and democratic rights at home, and the struggle for socialism.



Opening Guns of World War III

WASHINGTON'S ASSAULT ON IRAQ
Jack Barnes
In *New International* no. 7
\$12.00



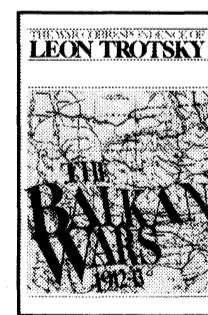
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Edgar Keemer,
and others
\$20.95

To Speak the Truth

WHY WASHINGTON'S 'COLD WAR' AGAINST CUBA DOESN'T END
Fidel Castro
and Che Guevara
\$16.95

Pro-choice marchers mark clinic killings

Continued from front page

made promises of protection and vigilance. So how can this terrorism go on for so many years? Because, despite the promises, the government has ignored it.

"We are here today to remember the tragedy and to ensure justice. It is truly our battle. No one will do it for us," she said.

The audience greeted with applause and cheers appeals by several speakers for a large turnout inside and outside the courtroom during the trial of John Salvi, the rightist who has been charged with the murders at the Planned Parenthood and Pre-Term clinics. Salvi's trial begins February 5 in a Boston suburb. His attorney has announced he will plead not guilty

on grounds of temporary insanity.

David Gunn Jr. also addressed the rally. He spoke of the murder of his father, Dr. David Gunn, in front of a clinic in Pensacola, Florida, in 1993. "My father traveled 1,000 miles a week to six clinics in Alabama, Georgia, and Florida — one per day," he said, "because he was the only doctor willing to perform abortions in the area. The authorities were aware of the threat of violence. There were 'Wanted' posters, produced by antiabortion groups, with my father's picture on them in three states. Yet they did nothing."

Gunn pointed out that since 1977 there have been 40 bombings, 102 cases of arson, and 96 shootings and assaults against

abortion clinics in the United States. Today, 20 percent of women have no access to abortion services, he said.

Boston area clinics continue to be targeted by Operation Rescue and other antiabortion groups. William Cotter, local head of Operation Rescue, told the *Boston Globe* that his organization will not abandon confrontation at the clinics. He said the clinic murders are being used "not only to slander us, but to further the violence they're involved in, which is the day-in, day-out violence of abortion."

Other rally speakers included Susan Webber, executive vice president of Planned Parenthood; poets Marge Piercy and Rosario Morales; Diane Djong, a wel-

fare rights activist; and Dominic Bozzotto, president of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union Local 26.

Kate DeSmet, a member of the Newspaper Guild on strike against the Detroit *News* and *Free Press*, also spoke. "I am here because of two issues — violence and justice," she said. "You in Boston know about these issues and so do we. I represent here today the 2,000 men and women on strike in Detroit. I bring you the good news that, like you, we are not going to give up."

After the rally many participants joined a memorial service and candlelight vigil outside the clinics in Brookline sponsored by Planned Parenthood and Pre-Term.

— YOUNG SOCIALISTS AROUND THE WORLD —

'Solidarity is a part of daily life in Paris'

BY MATILDE MARTI
AND JACK WILLE

PARIS — Young Socialists arrived here to the sound of solidarity chants, with thousands of people waving signs and banners against government plans to cut deep into workers' social wage. YS members from Canada and the United States came just in time to participate in a massive demonstration of 200,000 here December 12.

A contingent of thousands of rail workers led the demonstration, carrying bright red flares that set a tone of combativeness throughout the march. This was our introduction to the class struggle heating up in France.

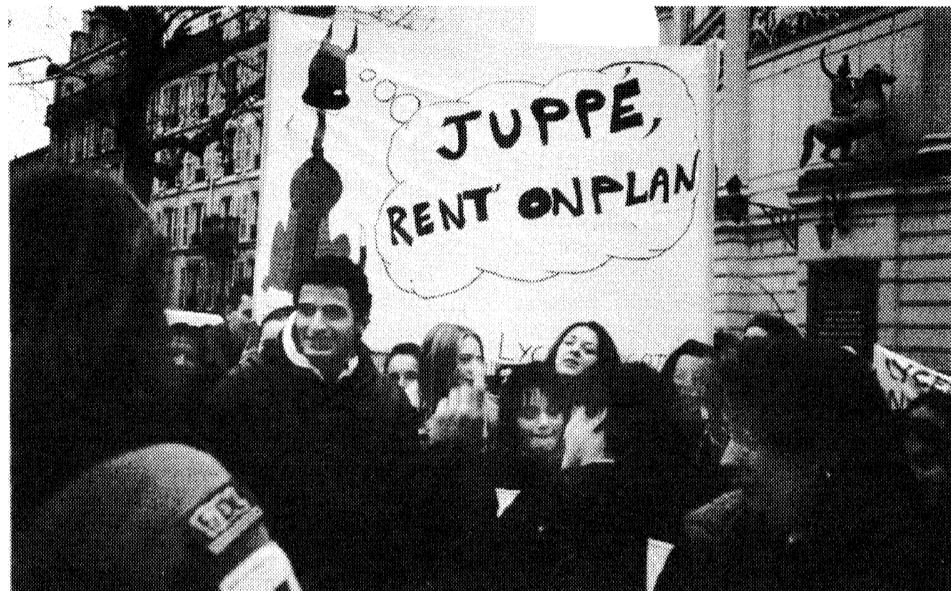
That morning Carlos Cornejo from the Montreal YS attended a general assembly of rail workers at the Austerlitz train station. In explaining the vanguard role of the rail workers, one striker stated that they had "a moral and social responsibility to fight in solidarity with students and other workers."

Later on, as they arrived at the starting point of the march, many people began shouting, "The rail workers are arriving! They are here! Vive the rail workers!"

Protesters identify with Quebecois

"I received a lot of applause, shouts of 'Bravo!' and 'Merci!' and got in many long discussions when protesters saw my sign," reported Young Socialists member Guy Tremblay. His sign read "Travailleur du Quebec Solidaire" (Worker from Quebec in Solidarity).

Many people approached him to offer their solidarity with the struggle in Quebec. Several wanted to know more about the fight for independence, because there



Students protest in Paris against the Juppé plan, December 12. Young Socialists from around world have joined the campaign to sell socialist books in France.

has been little coverage of it here.

Solidarity has, in fact, become part of the daily life of many people in Paris. We experienced this on several occasions.

During the transportation strike, hitchhiking became a common form of travel. Like many others, we hitchhiked in order to get around the Paris area. In the process, YS members met people from Peru, Tunisia, and Algeria, as well as striking workers and students. Some of our best discussions have been with Algerian immigrants, who explain the *Vigipirate*, an anti-immigrant campaign in France.

On December 14, we went to the University of Paris VIII at St. Denis, where students had been occupying the campus.

YS members were invited to speak at a meeting of more than 50 students and professors who were discussing how to strengthen their fight. Three rail workers from the General Confederation of Workers (CGT) union in Montparnasse came to offer their solidarity with the students and encouraged them to participate in the upcoming demonstrations.

One student emphasized at this meeting that the fight goes beyond the borders of France, pointing to the example of people from Canada, Germany, and the United States who were attending the meeting.

Tissier Sylvette, a nurse from a local hospital, explained how the Government wants health-care workers to act as immigration cops. "Since Vigipirate, most immigrants without legal papers have stopped going to hospitals for fear of deportation," she said.

During the week, we made several visits to railway stations to speak with striking workers. On two different occasions, strikers commented on the fact that the government has money to do nuclear testing, but at the same time has none for social security.

At the Montparnasse station, striker Jean Marc commented, "It's not true that there is no money. The nuclear testing by the French government in other lands shows the opposite.

"They try to convince the world that France is the country of freedom and human rights," he said, "but meanwhile our rulers are showing to the entire world their contempt for the people."

YS members from both Britain and New Zealand arrived in time for another strike demonstration of 200,000 in Paris December 16.

We all wore signs stating what country we came from and that we were there in solidarity. Many people approached us to find out more, while others gave us a thumbs up or raised fists, expressing their gratitude.

Nathan Simms from New Zealand reported that people approached him all day to ask his opinion about the nuclear testing by the French government in the Pacific. Many people carried signs opposing nuclear testing.

The demonstration route went past a major prison in Paris, "La Santé." Prison-

ers there were waving and tossing burning papers through the bars, demonstrating their support for the workers in the march. Demonstrators responded by waving and cheering the people in prison. There was a sense of solidarity that none of us had ever seen before.

International delegation works together

It has been quite an experience for YS members from four different countries to learn to work together, in French, English, and Spanish. We held a couple of events in the last week of December. At St. Denis, the YS sponsored a class on the struggle for women's equality, which two French youth attended.

We had discussions with youth from Paris about the YS and the possibilities of collaborating more closely with young people interested in our movement. One high school student was attracted most by our emphasis on defending the Cuban revolution and our internationalism. Some people have joined us in sales of communist literature.

We held a discussion on the imperialist war drive against Yugoslavia and the working-class campaign to oppose it. Four young women attended, including three who were at the Cuba Lives festival in Havana in August 1995 and another who had bought the entire series of *Nouvelle Internationale* at one of our literature tables the day before.

Matilde Marti is a member of the Young Socialists in Sheffield, England. Jack Willey is a YS member in New York.

Socialist conferences attract hundreds

BY LAURA GARZA

Hundreds of unionists and youth gathered for socialist educational conferences in four cities over New Year's weekend to discuss "Organizing a Working-Class Campaign to Oppose Imperialism's War Drive against Yugoslavia." The conferences were cosponsored by the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialists.

In Atlanta 85 activists from cities throughout the south joined in the discussions and classes. Two people there asked to join the Young Socialists and more than \$625 in socialist literature was sold.

Participants in the Boston educational event kicked off their weekend by joining hundreds of others in a mobilization to defend abortion rights. The action marked the first anniversary of the murder of two clinic workers by a rightist thug and opponent of women's rights.

Some 175 people attended the conference. The main talk there on "Stop NATO's War Drive against Yugoslavia — Emulate the Cuban Revolution" was given by Socialist Workers Party National Committee member Thabo Ntweng. Conference participants also heard a presentation on "Building the Communist Movement Today: Recruiting Dangerous Men and Women," by Angel Lariscy, a member of the United Auto Workers union from Peoria, Illinois. Two people asked to join the Young Socialists, and two others asked to become members of the Socialist

Workers Party at the Boston gathering.

Many of the 141 people who registered at the conference in Detroit said a highlight of the weekend was the presentation by a member of the Communist League in Canada titled "Reportback from the Revolt in France and the Fight for Quebec Independence." The three other socialist conferences heard similar reports from socialist workers and youth who had just returned from France, where they helped sell the Marxist magazine *Nouvelle Internationale* (New International). Two youth asked to join the Young Socialists and two people also asked to become members of the SWP. In both Boston and Detroit the conferences heard from unionists on strike against the Detroit News and *Free Press*.

In Seattle 159 socialist workers and other activists from Vancouver, British Columbia, in Canada to Salt Lake City, Utah, to California heard a presentation by Paul Mailhot, a member of the SWP National Committee, titled "Mining Our Communist Continuity." Complete with a slide presentation run from a computer disk, Mailhot explained the project currently under way to scan and make available on CD-ROM the rich lessons contained in the magazines *New International*, *Fourth International*, and *International Socialist Review*.

Further coverage about these successful socialist educational conferences will appear in upcoming issues.

Young Socialists launch fund drive

The Young Socialists launched a \$10,000 fund drive on New Year's day. It will last through March 3.

The funds raised will enable YS members to carry out national and international responsibilities, and meet expenses for the YS headquarters, as they build a meeting of Young Socialists in the United States. The nationwide YS conference will take place in Minneapolis, Minnesota, April 6-7.

Listed below are the initial goals adopted by Young Socialists groups in eight areas. All YS chapters and at-large members are encouraged to send in their goals as soon as possible. Weekly payments on pledges are urgently needed.

Boston	500
Los Angeles	1,000
Miami	400
Newark, NJ	300
New York	1,500
Philadelphia	150
Pittsburgh	150
Twin Cities, MN	2,000
Total pledged	6,000
Goal	10,000

Anyone interested can contribute to the fund drive. Please send pledges or contributions to: Young Socialists, P.O. Box 2396, New York, N.Y. 10009. Tel: (212) 475-6482.

Post office strikers return with dignity

BY ROLLANDE GIRARD AND JONATHAN SILBERMAN

CAEN, France — Striking workers at the postal sorting office here voted overwhelmingly Friday, December 29, to end their four-week strike and return to work. Applause and chants of "Tous ensemble!" (All together!) — the slogan which has become identified with the mass movement against the Juppé government's austerity plan — greeted the vote. "We haven't won all our demands," said striker Roger Chapuis, one of a majority in the plant who is not a member of any of the trade unions, "but we're not returning with our heads bowed."

For most of the strike the 250 workers had occupied the sorting office, but in the early morning hours December 28, 100 militarized police removed the strikers and took out the mail that had built up.

The police action generated broad opposition. An impromptu demonstration headed by the strikers won support from local rail and hospital workers. The occupation had been popular among working people throughout this mainly agricultural region of northwestern France. Weekly collections were organized by, among others, machinists at Moulinex, auto workers at Citroën, and rail and hospital workers. Forty thousand francs (5 francs=US\$1) had been donated to the strike fund. A demonstration of 300 farmers protested the disruption of the mail, calling on Mme. Bernard, regional director of the government-owned sorting company, to accede to the strikers' demands.

The occupation-strike in Caen started as part of the mass social movement that mushroomed across France in early December.

The movement, which brought millions into action on the streets, was focused on the government's attempt to slash social spending. Many groups of workers who took strike action against Prime Minister Alain Juppé's austerity plan added their

own demands. At the Caen Centre de Tri, strikers demanded an end to a divisive hiring policy which the company has stepped up in recent years. Since 1994 new starts have been employed on a casual basis. They have no guaranteed hours or even work at all, are on permanent call, and receive inferior wages and conditions.

The main strike demand was that 15 such *précaires* workers be given full-time contracts on the same basis as everyone else. "For many the future is no future — we have to stop that" said striker Jean-Claude Lion, a member of one of the unions. "As long as the company is able to maintain such divisions, we are weaker," said Gérard Lejoin.

Many of the strikers said they thought the French government and employers intended to inflict the same sort of blows dealt over the past 10 years to working people in the United Kingdom. "Bernard = Thatcher" was plastered all over the walls of the Centre de Tri. Tens of thousands demonstrated in Caen on December 19, the biggest such action locally since the general strike movement of 1968, when the Caen Centre de Tri was also occupied by the workers.

Since then there have been three more occupations — in 1974, 1984, and 1995. Workers spoke of their determination to



Militant/Tony Hunt

Demonstration of striking transit workers in Marseille, Dec. 28, 1995. Workers are pulling a bus with "negotiations broken down" painted on windows.

prevent the company from succeeding in its attempts to erode conditions established by past battles. "The future will be what we make of it. All together" was painted on the wall.

The agreement negotiated by the union leaders and accepted by the mass meeting

provides for the gradual integration of the *précaires* onto full-time contracts over the next three months on condition that the volume of work holds up. The company agreed to pay the strikers for one-third of the strike days and to spread the lost wages over the next year.

Marxist books snapped up in France

BY ERNIE MAILHOT AND JASON PHELPS

PARIS — "These are interesting books. We need Che Guevara here in France." This was the response of François, a young French soldier in the Gare du Nord train station on Christmas day. On his way back to base, he had just stopped to talk to members of an international team in France selling the Marxist magazine *Nouvelle Internationale*.

François, like other young French men, was conscripted into the military and forced to serve a 10-month tour of duty.

Several French soldiers at the station explained that they supported the recent strikes and mobilizations of workers and students against the government's austerity drive. One soldier, another draftee, explained that as a student he had been part

of the fight against the subminimum wage for young people. He opposed sending troops to Yugoslavia and was especially interested in reading the *Nouvelle Internationale* featuring the article "Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's assault on Iraq." He said, however, that he would probably get in trouble with his sergeant if he took this book to his base.

Michel, a draftee originally from the French colony of Guadeloupe, said that he thought there was no choice but for France to send troops. But, after discussing the recent attacks by the French government against immigrants, he said, "The racism I've seen, including in the military, does make me question what the government is doing in Yugoslavia."

Since December 16, the international team of communist workers and students here has included participants from France, Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Greece, New Zealand, and Sweden. The team has sold more than 220 copies of *Nouvelle Internationale* and several thousand dollars worth of revolutionary literature published and distributed by Pathfinder Press.

Three members of the team went to Marseille, where strikes continue. They sold 15 copies of *Nouvelle Internationale* and participated in activities with fighters there. Like in Paris, many strikers in Marseille were interested in knowing if workers in the United States and other countries had heard about their fight. "It's good what you're doing," said Jean-Pierre Chasnay, a power plant worker on strike in Marseille, about the sale of *Nouvelle Internationale* by workers from other countries. "The future of unions is international."

Sales of the Marxist magazine have picked up at tables in front of bookstores. Twenty-five copies of *Nouvelle Internationale* were sold in front of the Gibert Jeune bookstore. Many of these were to students and immigrant workers.

One person who stopped by the table purchased a subscription to the Spanish-language magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*, to be sent to his home in Chiapas, Mexico.

More than a dozen young people from Paris have attended classes organized by members of the Young Socialists from Canada and the United States. These classes have discussed the war drive against Yugoslavia, the fight for independence in Quebec, and the *Nouvelle Internationale* article "Opening Guns of World War III."

Some 15 French workers and students attended a Militant Labor Forum here December 28 on the Cuban revolution.

Transit workers strike in Marseille

Continued from front page

workers in Limoges. Some rail workers in Paris staged a 24-hour work stoppage December 30 on one rapid transit line to press demands for payment of wages lost during the strike and an end to sanctions against individual strikers.

The biggest action at present is the strike and occupation of bus depots by transit workers in Marseille, France's second biggest city. Drivers here walked off the job December 7.

At the La Rose depot, Michel, who has three years' seniority, said, "Since 1993, all drivers are hired on a temporary basis. We have to work three hours more [than workers hired before '93] and we earn 1,000 francs less each month." Average wages run at roughly 7,400 francs (5 francs=US\$1) a month for a 36.4 hour workweek, for workers with more than three years' seniority.

André, a bus driver with 30 years' seniority, was picketing at the same depot. In late November, he said, "the rail workers started with their strike and then everybody started protesting Juppé's plan. We joined the protests and it was a good time to press our demands."

As he handed out leaflets to shoppers in a mall December 27, striker Jean Carmignani described his reaction to the December 16 anti-Juppé demonstration of more than 150,000 in Marseille. "It was the same atmosphere as at the liberation of Marseille [from Nazi rule] in 1945," he said. "It was like workers had been freed from the pressures of their work," as they took to the streets.

On December 18, strikers blocked the tracks of the Metro rapid transit lines and won support from Metro workers to shut down public transit completely. On December 29, while negotiations were under way, management got some rapid transit trains operating by using scab drivers and hundreds of riot police to keep strikers off the tracks and station platforms. Local judges have summoned some 30 strikers

to court to face charges of "interfering with the right to work" of scab drivers.

In response, strikers voted December 30 to continue their strike and depot occupation. They also called a solidarity demonstration at the courthouse January 2.

Negotiations are continuing

"This is the only transit system in France with two-tier wages," said a driver picketing at La Rose. "If we don't stop it, it will spread to others also."

Michel Mas, picketing at Capelette depot, stated, "Young workers are getting jobs later and later — not till they're 25 years old." Like many other drivers, he said they were striking "for the future," against the setting of a national precedent.

Two seamen dropped by the Arenc depot as *Militant* reporters talked with strikers there. "We're on our way to Algeria," they said, "but we couldn't pass by without bringing you something." They left a bottle of wine and cigarettes.

"The solidarity from the public has been touching," said Emmanuel Uguet, union representative at La Rose. He described the Christmas celebrations held at all four depots. "People we didn't even know brought us money, hot food, and presents for our children. Some, especially workers from the private sector, said they wished they could do what we are doing but they fear losing their jobs."

On December 28 some 600 strikers and a few supporters marched noisily through Marseille to press their demands for negotiations with the mayor. Many passers-by took union leaflets with a smile. A few angrily crumpled them up.

Up to 125 workers meet briefly in each depot in the morning to hear a report on the previous 24 hours and decide by hand vote whether to continue the strike. Workers' cafeterias in the depots remain open. Strikers gather there throughout the day to eat, discuss, and play cards.

Jean-Bernard Martinez, 31, said that whatever happens "we come out of the

conflict with our heads held high, above all because we have regained what is essential: solidarity between *traminots* [transit workers]."

Tony Hunt from London contributed to this article.

MARTIGUES, France — The 185 workers at the Electricité de France (EDF) power plant here, west of Marseille, occupied the plant for more than three weeks in December, demanding the restoration of 30 jobs and the granting of permanent status to those with temporary positions. Late on December 29, EDF ceded 10 new jobs and the occupation ended.

"At the start of the strike, we took over the control room and reduced output," said Jean-Pierre Charnay, a union delegate. "This was part of the national EDF workers strike against the Juppé plan — as well as our local demands."

After the bosses threatened legal action against control room workers, a general union assembly decided to occupy the entire plant. The company unsuccessfully sought to evict them.

Workers at other EDF plants returned to work as national protests wound down before Christmas.

Sitting in the strike office a few days before the settlement, striker Laure Greze described the solidarity expressed by neighbors and showed *Militant* reporters a video of the December 16 march in Marseille.

"It was grandiose," she said. "I'd only ever been on the big demonstration last year against the subminimum youth wage. Look there on the screen — you can see our contingent still waiting to begin the march and the first demonstrators are already walking home."

— K.L. AND H.M.

Building a Party of Communist Workers

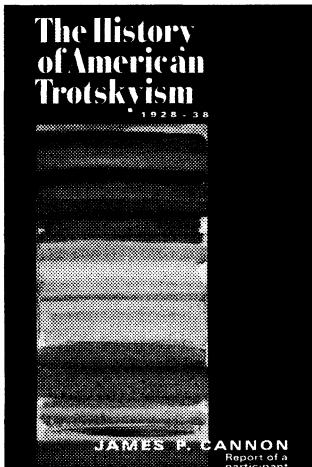
Struggles that Forged the Socialist Workers Party

BY JAMES P. CANNON

A traveling organizer for the Industrial Workers of the World before and during World War I and a leader of the working-class left wing of the Socialist Party, Cannon became a central leader of the Communist Party of the United States following the Russian revolution in 1917. He was expelled from the Communist Party in 1928. Cannon collaborated with Leon Trotsky, a central leader of the Bolshevik Party in the early years of the Russian revolution, in fighting to maintain the communist course of V.I. Lenin in face of the counterrevolution in the Soviet Union led by Joseph Stalin. A founding leader of the Socialist Workers Party, Cannon served as SWP national secretary until 1954 and was national chairman emeritus at his death in 1974.

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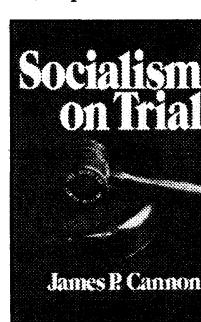
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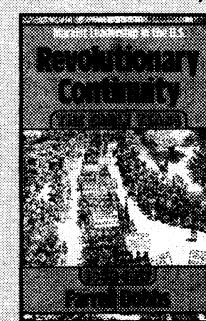
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BY FARRELL DOBBS

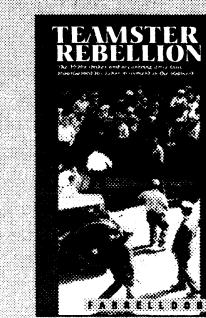
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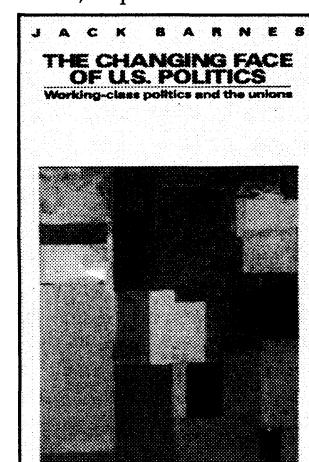
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'In the Sierra, we felt in flesh and blood the need for change in life of the people'

Excerpt from Ernesto Che Guevara's 'Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War'

The following is the chapter "On the March" from *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War — 1956-58* by Ernesto Che Guevara. The book was written as a series of articles that appeared in *Verde Olivo* (Olive Drab), the weekly publication of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba, between 1961 and 1964.

In February 1996 Pathfinder Press will release a new edition of the *Episodes*, including material previously not available in English. The excerpt below is copyright © Pathfinder Press and is reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

May 1957

BY ERNESTO CHE GUEVARA

The first two weeks of May were days of continual marching toward our objective. At the beginning of the month, we were on a hill along the crest of the Sierra Maestra close to the Turquino; we were crossing regions that later were the scenes of many events of the revolution. We passed through Santa Ana and El Hombrito; later on, at Pico Verde, we found [Manuel] Escudero's house and we continued until we reached the Loma del Burro.

We were moving eastward, looking for the weapons that were supposed to be sent from Santiago and would be hidden in the region of the Loma del Burro, close to Oro de Guisa. One night during this two-week journey, while going to carry out a private necessity, I confused the paths and was lost for three days until I found the troops again at a spot called El Hombrito.

At that time I realized that we were each carrying on our backs everything necessary for individual survival: salt, cooking oil, canned foods, canned milk, everything required for sleeping, making a fire, and cooking, and also a compass, on which I had relied very heavily until then.

Finding myself lost, the next morning I took out the compass and, guiding myself with it, I continued for a day and a half until I realized that I was even more lost. I approached a peasant hut and the people directed me to the rebel encampment. Later we would realize that in such rugged territory as the Sierra Maestra a compass can only give a general orientation, never a definite course; one has either to be led by guides or to know the area oneself, as we later knew it when I was operating in that same region.

I was very moved by the warm reception that greeted me when I rejoined the column. When I arrived they had just held a people's trial in which three informers were tried, and one of them, named Nápoles, was condemned to death. Camilo [Cienfuegos] chaired that tribunal.

Performing duties as doctor

During those days I had to perform my duties as doctor, and in each little village or hamlet I set up my consulting station. It was monotonous, for I had few medicines to offer and the clinical cases in the Sierra were all more or less the same: prematurely aged and toothless women, children with distended bellies, parasitism, rickets, general vitamin deficiency—these were the marks of the Sierra Maestra.¹

Even today they continue, but in much smaller proportion. The children of those mothers of the Sierra have gone to study at the Camilo Cienfuegos School City; they are grown up and healthy and are different boys and girls from the first undernourished inhabitants of our pioneer School City.²

¹ Average life expectancy in Cuba during the late 1950s was estimated to be between 55 and 62 years, with infant mortality at 60 per 1,000 live births. Health conditions in rural areas such as the Sierra Maestra were even worse. In 1957, 14 percent of rural workers had suffered from tuberculosis; 13 percent from typhoid fever; 31 percent from malaria; and 36 percent from intestinal parasites. By the mid-1990s average life expectancy in Cuba had reached over 75 years, with infant mortality dropping to under 10 per 1,000 live births, and with an extensive network of health care in both rural and urban areas.

I remember that a little girl was watching the consultations that I gave to the women of the region. They came in with an almost religious air to find out the cause of their sufferings. When her mother arrived, the little girl, after attentively watching several previous examinations in the little hut that served as my clinic, chattered gaily: "Mommy, this doctor says the same thing to everybody."

And it was absolutely true; my knowledge was good for little else. But in addition, they all had the same clinical traits, and without knowing it they each told the same heartrending story. What would have happened if the doctor had diagnosed the strange tiredness that the young mother of several children suffered when she carried a pail of water up from the creek to the house as being due simply to too much work on such a poor and meager diet? Her exhaustion is something inexplicable to her, since all her life the woman has taken the same pails of water to the same place, and only now does she feel tired.

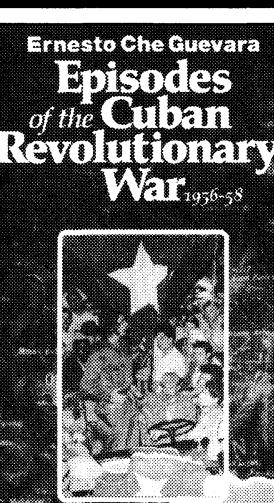
People in Sierra grow like wild flowers

The people in the Sierra grow like wild flowers, untended and without care, and they wear themselves out rapidly, working without reward. There, during those consultations, we began to feel in our flesh and blood the need for a definitive change in the life of the people. The idea of agrarian reform became clear, and oneness with the people ceased being theory and was converted into a fundamental part of our being.

The guerrillas and the peasantry began to merge into a single mass, without our being able to say at what precise moment on the long revolutionary road this happened, nor at which moment the words became profoundly real and we became a part of the peasantry. In my own case, at least, those consultations with the peasants of the Sierra converted my spontaneous and somewhat lyrical resolve into something of a different nature, more real. Those suffering and loyal inhabitants of the Sierra Maestra have never suspected the role they played in forging our revolutionary ideas.

It was there that Guillermo García was promoted to captain and took charge of all the peasants who joined the column. Perhaps Comrade Guillermo does not remember the date: it is noted in my diary as May 6, 1957.

The following day, Haydée Santamaría left with precise instructions from Fidel, to make the necessary contacts. But a day later we got the news of the arrest of "Nicaragua"—Commander Iglesias, who was in charge of bringing us the weapons. This was quite disconcerting for us, as we could not imagine what we would do now to get them; nevertheless, we decided to continue walking in the



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Council of State Office of Historical Affairs, Havana

Fidel Castro reviewing new reinforcements for Rebel Army in the Sierra, March-April 1957.

same direction.

We reached a place near Pino del Agua, a small ravine with an abandoned lumber yard on the very edge of the Sierra Maestra; there were also two uninhabited peasant huts. Near a road, one of our patrols captured an army corporal. This individual was well known for his crimes going back to the time of Machado. For this reason some of our troops proposed that he be executed, but Fidel refused; we simply left him guarded by the new recruits who did not yet have rifles. He was warned that any attempt to escape would cost him his life.

Most of us continued on our way to see if the weapons had arrived at the agreed spot, and if so, to transport them. It was a long hike, although with less weight, since our full knapsacks had been left in the camp where the prisoner was.

The march, however, was fruitless: the equipment had not arrived, which we naturally attributed to the arrest of "Nicaragua." We were able to purchase a substantial amount of food at a store, so we returned to camp with a different, although welcome, load.

Suddenly shots ahead of us

We were returning slowly by the same road, exhausted, moving along the crests of the Sierra Maestra and crossing the open spaces carefully. Suddenly we heard shots ahead of us. We were worried because one of our men had gone on ahead in order to reach the camp as soon as possible; he was Guillermo Domínguez, a lieutenant of our troop and one of the men who had arrived with the reinforcements from Santiago.

We prepared for all contingencies while we sent out some scouts. After a reasonable length of time, the scouts appeared accompanied by Comrade Fiallo, a new

recruit who belonged to Crescencio's group and had joined the guerrillas during our absence. He had come from our camp and explained that there was a dead body on the road, and that there had been an encounter with the enemy, who had retreated in the direction of Pino del Agua where there was a larger detachment.

We advanced cautiously, and came upon the body, which I recognized. It was Guillermo Domínguez; he was naked from the waist up and had a bullet hole in the left elbow, and a bayonet wound in the left upper chest; his head was literally shattered by a shot, apparently from his own shotgun. Some buckshot pellets remained as evidence in the lacerated flesh of our unfortunate comrade.

We were able to reconstruct the facts by analyzing various data: the enemy soldiers were apparently scouting for their friend, the corporal we had captured. They had heard Domínguez coming toward them, walking without much concern, for he had traveled the same path the day before.

They had taken him prisoner; but some of Crescencio's men were coming to meet us from the other direction. On surprising the soldiers from the rear, Crescencio's men fired and the soldiers retreated, murdering our comrade Domínguez before fleeing.

Pino del Agua is the site of a sawmill in the middle of the Sierra, and the path the guards took is an old crossroad for transporting lumber. We had to follow this trail for a hundred meters, in order to reach our narrow path. Our comrade had not taken the most elementary precautions in this case, and was unlucky enough to bump into the soldiers.

His bitter fate served us as an example for the future.

Published in *Verde Olivo*, Dec. 24, 1961.

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Remembering Che: an internationalist

'Trabajadores' interview with Cuban brigadier general Harry Villegas (Pombo)

Following is an interview with Cuban brigadier general Harry Villegas (Pombo) conducted by Cuban journalist Elsa Blaquier Ascaño. It was originally published in the June 12, 1995, issue of *Trabajadores*, the weekly newspaper of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers. The interview appeared under the title, "Memories of Che, Harry Villegas Tamayo, an internationalist in the Congo, Bolivia, and Angola." The translation from Spanish and subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY ELSA BLAQUIER ASCAÑO

HAVANA, Cuba — I still remember him as extremely thin, with an almost beardless face and fine features that contrasted with the darkness of his skin, all of which gave him an appearance even younger than his 25 years. It took a real effort to see in him the battle-tested veteran of the guerrilla struggle in the Sierra Maestra, the western invasion, the taking of Santa Clara, and the internationalist aid to the Congo.

Then, without a moment's rest, he again undertook an important mission together with the man who had taken him in as a 17-year-old soldier and to whom he was united with ties that not even death could break: Che.

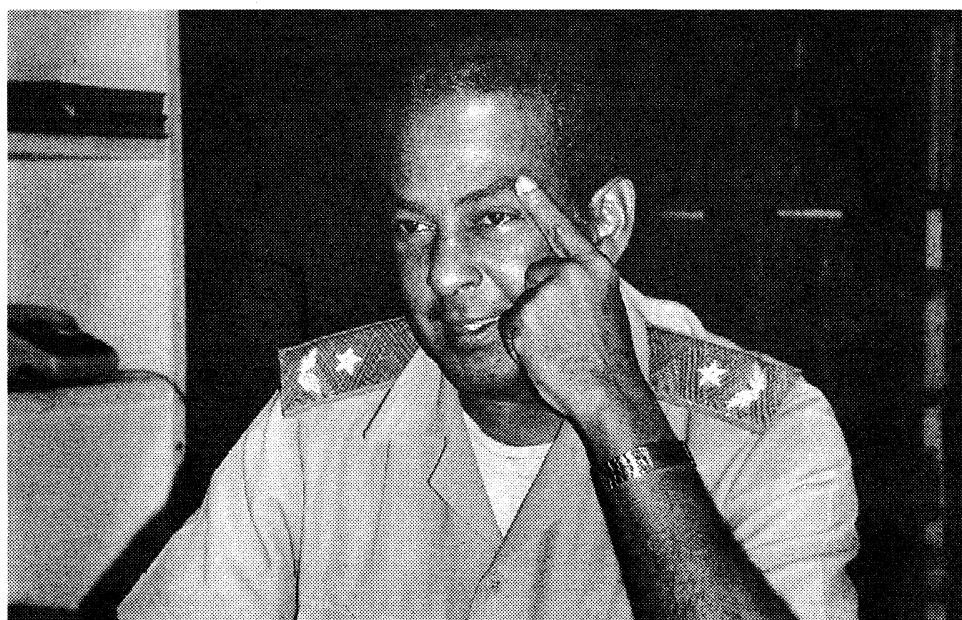
In those days of May 1965, together with José María Martínez Tamayo (Papi) and Carlos Coello (Tuma), he prepared the logistical and organizational foundations for what was to become the Bolivian guerrilla movement.

Today a brigadier general, Harry Villegas Tamayo has since added new pages to his record as an internationalist and as a military leader, which earn him the right to wear on his chest the gold star of Hero of the Republic of Cuba, which the Council of State recently awarded him.

Harry continues being Pombo, whom the Cuban people met through Che's *Bolivian Diary*; the one who amazed the world with the feat of commanding the small group that was able to elude their encirclement by the CIA after the death of the Heroic Guerrilla.

His modesty has caused him to avoid interviews other than those where he speaks of his unforgettable leader and teacher. Today, however, he was unable to escape the siege and we made him remember his childhood in Yara, at the entrance to the eastern mountains, when his father Andrés, a carpenter of Cuban descent, taught him justice and humanity, and his mother Engracia, a housewife with a great gift for commerce, inculcated in him a sense for business.

He was born near the Sierra Maestra on



Cuban brigadier general Harry Villegas (Pombo) in Havana last June

Militant/Luis Madrid

May 10, 1940, and was influenced by the traditions of the area. Near there is the tamarind tree where it is said that Hatuey was burned at the stake, and near the spot where Céspedes freed his slaves and issued the first call for Cuba's independence.¹ He was like all the young boys there, a good baseball player and an enthusiastic swimmer in the nearby river.

"I was the tenth and youngest child; I was able to study because my mother had come by some money from two stores and a bakery that she had in Yara and Palma. My father, on the other hand, had nothing; he was very generous and used to give everything away.

"When the struggle in the Sierra Maestra began, I was studying business in Manzanillo. That event had a deep impact on me, and I immediately joined the underground movement. After several jailings inside the rural guard's garrison, I decided to join the rebels, although my mother was opposed because she felt I was too skinny and couldn't take it."

Meets Che for the first time

Pombo first joined a group of men in the Cauto valley armed with hunting rifles. Later he made contact with Chino Figueroa's troops, and was with them when Che arrived. He remembers the

great impression made on him that day by this guerrilla fighter, who was already a symbol.

"He asked what we were doing there, who had sent us. We said we were there to fight for Cuba's freedom and that it had



Council of State Office of Historical Affairs, Havana

Rebel Army on the march in the Sierra Maestra

been our own decision. He then told us to go down to the plains and disarm some soldiers so that each of us could return with a weapon."

Although the undertaking turned out to be difficult, they did not return empty-handed. Che allowed them to stay more

Pablo Ribalta, and Hermes Peña — the same individuals who later became the Heroic Guerrilla's bodyguard. "We were selected to participate in the battle of El Jigüe and later in the encirclement to prevent Batista's army from reaching the command post at La Plata.

"The majority of us were just kids: San Luis [Eliseo Reyes—"Rolando"], Joel Iglesias, Tamayo, Hermes Peña, Carlos Coello. The platoon of Che's command post, where I was assigned, was a school; we studied mathematics, Spanish, tactics, guerrilla warfare; we read novels and history books. I wasn't among those who progressed the most, so Che used to tell me that I was an intellectual who had graduated from 'Yara University.' He liked to surround himself with youth and force us to improve ourselves."

The battles of Cuatro Compañeros and La Federal, occurring on the plains during the historic march toward Villa Clara, are etched in his memory. So too are Che's efforts to unite the revolutionary forces that operated in the Escambray, among them the Second Front, which opposed having the July 26 Movement operate there.

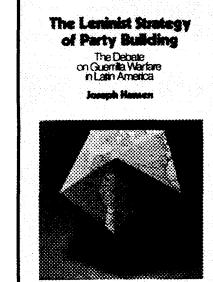
"The Las Villas campaign can be considered as a lightning operation; in it Che graduated as a strategist and consolidated his abilities as a military leader," Pombo says, adding, "He went against the laws of warfare that call for numerical superiority before launching an attack."

"He calculated that surprise was a psychological factor that weakened the 3,000 soldiers defending Santa Clara, while we numbered about 600. Che had a daring recklessness, but he wouldn't just give his life away. In that battle he proved very audacious. He was the first to enter the city, accompanied only by Aleida [March],

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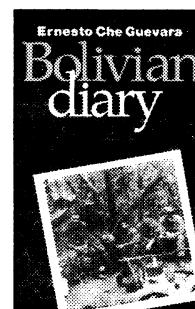
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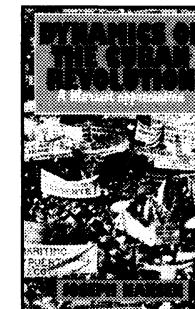
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Parra, and me. As we advanced, people came out and said: 'Here comes Che with some women!' because we had long hair.

"Havana scared me. When we arrived at La Cabaña I looked at it from atop the statue of Christ and I didn't dare go out until the day Che arrived and asked me if I, the head of his personal escort, intended to go around doing nothing. That's how I found out about my assignment, I got in the car with him and finally left."

As a member of the escort, Pombo lived for many years together with Che and his family, until starting a family of his own. He was given the responsibility of attending the school of administration, of directing several enterprises, later returning to the Revolutionary Armed Forces.

"By then I had a son, Harry Andrés, and had carried out several military and political responsibilities. For some time I had not seen Che because he was traveling and I was serving in the tank unit of Managua, until one day they came to look for me. I spent several days together with Carlos Coello on a farm in Cubanacán, and Tuma



Council of State Office of Historical Affairs
Leaders of Rebel Army and July 26 Movement in Sierra Maestra, 1957. From left to right: Che Guevara, Fidel Castro, Calixto García, Ramiro Valdés, Juan Almeida.

in. Chino, one of his bodyguards, was there too, as was a Congolese guerrilla named Ernesto, who spoke French and taught Che Swahili. As one could imagine, I had to join in the classes."

"The Congo was a great experience for

there was really a pause before going to South America, and in particular Argentina. But he did not want to leave there without having the request for our departure put in writing, to keep Cuba's prestige unblemished. It was also painful to leave behind the more than 3,000 African fighters who were accompanying us.

"From a human standpoint, that situation was very difficult for Che, and I know it was very hard for him to accept abandoning the struggle. Che spoke with them and asked them to choose 20 fighters to return with us to Cuba — it couldn't be more, because the boats could only carry the 100 or so Cubans who found ourselves there."

Out of that feat Harry kept the nickname of Pombo, part of the pseudonym his commander had given him: Pombo Pojo, which in the native tongue means green nectar. His eyes betray the happiness he felt when the unforgettable guerrilla met with Papi, Tuma, and him to ask if they would be willing to follow him to another part of the world.

"We immediately said yes. When we arrived at Dar es Salaam we left the other Cubans, traveled in pairs to Prague, where we remained for a long time preparing for

the new mission, until Fidel convinced him to return to Cuba.

From Africa to South America

"Papi was already in La Paz, making contact with the leadership of the Bolivian Communist Party; Tuma and I also went. We were charged with providing cover to Papi in all the organizational arrangements; then we were in Cuba for a few days.

"In July 1966 we departed for Bolivia, passing through many countries on the



Council of State Office of Historical Affairs
Last photograph of Ernesto Che Guevara and Fidel Castro (right) together, Havana, 1966. Guevara put on disguise before leaving Cuba for Bolivia that year.

said to me, jokingly, "So much eating without working will lead to no good."

Mission: nothing would happen to Che

"Fidel sent for us and said that Che had selected us to go with him, that he was already in Africa responding to a request for help from the revolutionary movement after the death of [Patrice] Lumumba, and he assigned us to help Che and guarantee that nothing happened to him. It was a proof of trust, which moved us deeply.

"That's how we ended up in Cairo after passing through several countries, and from there to Dar es Salaam, the capital of Tanzania. Upon arriving we joined up with the group that was preparing to enter Congo (Leopoldville), now Zaire. Che, Papi, and Víctor Dreke were already in the Congo; about three days after arriving at the camp we left. Pablo Ribalta, who was ambassador to Tanzania, explained the situation to us. We crossed the country in an area of natural reserve parks and arrived at Lake Tanganyika; it was impressive, with its 35,000 square kilometers of fresh water, where the wind stirred up enormous waves.

"We crossed in a canoe, on the other side we found a hut and a Cuban doctor (Kumy), who gave me a backpack that weighed about 75 pounds. I had not trained like the other comrades, so when I began to climb that mountain more than 1,700 meters high with that weight on my back, I had to ask for help. Then Tuma said to me: 'I told you, so much eating without working will surely lead to no good.'

"Che made me head of services and assigned me to the same cabin he was living

everyone. It was very difficult to understand the psychology of the African commanders, most of whom were not there. We were waiting for an African leader until Che decided to begin fighting the Belgian and South African mercenaries. It turned out to be a complex affair to understand the people there, who were living under a mixture of social stages, from the familial relations of the primitive community to more modern displays such as walking around with small portable radios or big wrist watches.

Struggle in the Congo

"We fought important battles, like the one at Force Bandera where we lost Vina-jera, Pío, Ballester, Warner Moro, and 14 Rwandans. We attacked and took the posts at Mwenga and Kovimvira, conducted several ambushes along the road to the lake, and led a surprise attack on the river port. We really fought, and with effectiveness, but the whole question of the leadership on the part of the Congolese created instability.

"At one point Che thought about going to the other end of the country to look for other groups that were fighting, but that would have involved a march of thousands of kilometers. When this was being considered the meeting of African heads of state at Addis Ababa took place, where they decided to alter the character of the assistance being given to the revolutionary movement in the Congo, allowing only armed cooperation with the independence movements of the Portuguese colonies — which was also within Che's conception of the struggle.

"The contribution that he was making

way. We planned out the arrival of all the comrades, looked for and bought the farm, discussed with Mario Monje having the [Bolivian Communist] Party join the struggle.² We did this until November 3, when Che arrived.

The confidence that Pombo's commander placed in him can be seen on every page of his diary written in Bolivian territory; Pombo was once again named head of services and was included on the general staff. There are countless references to Pombo being chosen to lead a scouting party or to evaluate where to set up camp.

On June 26, 1967, Che writes: "A black day for me. . . . We received word of two wounded: Pombo in the leg and Tuma in the stomach. . . . Pombo's wound is superficial. . . . Tuma . . . died during the operation. With his death I have lost an inseparable comrade and companion over all the recent years. His loyalty was unwavering, and I feel his absence almost as if he were my own son."³

Harry remembers the day he was wounded while trying to help his comrade of many battles and adventures. He recalls the events of October 8 with an equal measure of pain.

"We were close to the crest of the hill. Che knew the army was there and organized the defense. He ordered Tamayo (Urbano) and me to fight along the lower part of the ravine. Our mission was to hold our position if the attack came from that direction so people could regroup and retreat, especially the sick, to a previously designated place.

"A moment before the firing began, Che sent the Bolivians Nato and Aniceto to relieve us. Then the bullets began flying over us, we began to repel the attack, and we sent them to find out whether or not we were to leave. On their way back to our positions Aniceto was mortally wounded. Nato told us that Che had already withdrawn.

"We tried to withdraw but the enemy fire did not allow it. Around 1:30 the shots began to grow more distant. It was evident they wanted to circle around to prevent Che and the sick who were with him from escaping.

"When we were able to withdraw we went to the point where his command post had been, and we found he had taken the most valuable items; this indicated he was alive and was withdrawing to the agreed-upon location.

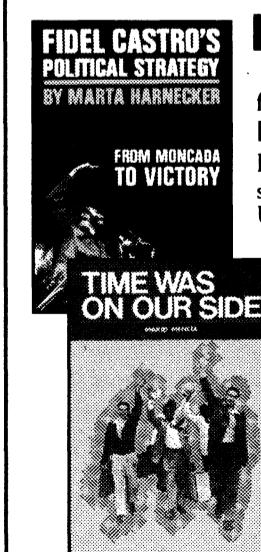
"We began climbing; when we were almost there they whistled, telling us not to move because we were surrounded. It was Dariel Alarcón (Benigno), Guido Peredo (Inti), and David Adriazola (Darío); we hit the ground and fell back to the ravine once

Continued on Page 10

² Mario Monje was general secretary of the Communist Party of Bolivia.

³ Ernesto Che Guevara, *Bolivian Diary*, Pathfinder Press, pp. 218–19.

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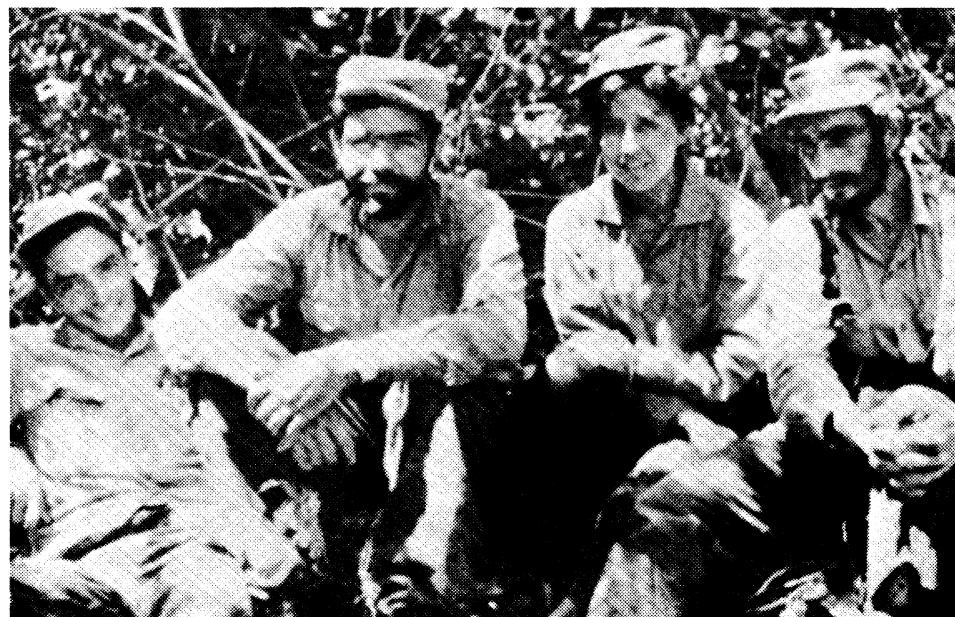
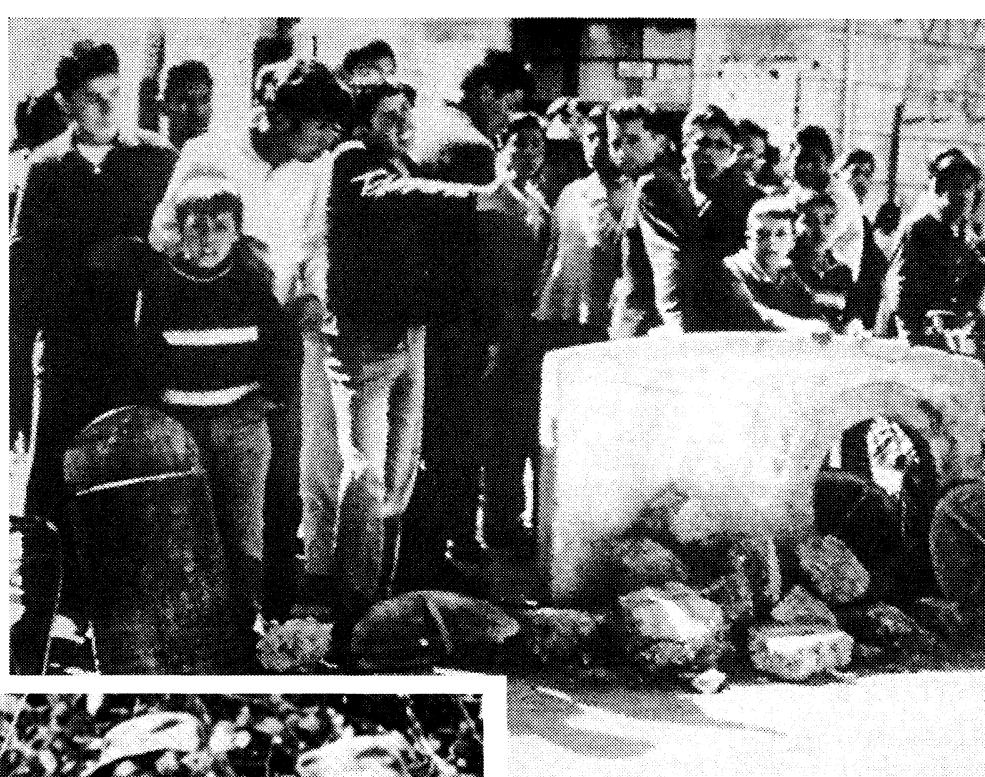
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Mario Mencía

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Remembering Che



Continued from page 9

again. About 6:00 p.m. the soldiers arrived again, threatening to lob grenades at us, but didn't. Later we regrouped. All night long the army harassed us.

"At dawn on October 9 we were hiding very close to the small schoolhouse at La Higuera. We saw the soldiers, observed the helicopters, but never imagined they were holding Che there. In the morning we heard the first news of his capture but reports were very confused, saying he was wounded, then saying he was not and that it was one of his officers. Finally they began to give details about his clothing and personal effects, and we knew it was true.

"It was a big blow, something terrible. We then decided to keep on fighting, that for us the war was not over, that we would fight together and nobody would be left behind. Inti, who was the political leader of the guerrilla unit, remained as such, and I assumed command of the group."

Then came the search for the sick, in whose defense Che had offered his precious life; the impossibility of finding them; breaking through one encirclement after another, which turned the march to the Chilean border into a feat truly fit for a novel, from which they came out alive thanks to the help of the revolutionary movement and the efforts of Salvador Allende, then a senator, who accompanied them back to the island.

In Angola until the end

After arriving in Cuba he returned to the ranks of the armed forces as chief of operations of the Eastern Army, and participated in Operation Mambí, dedicated to preparing land for cultivation, but he never abandoned hope of helping the revolutionaries renew their struggle in Bolivia. The death of Inti in Cochabamba frustrated his plans.

The artillery corps would employ him as political leader; the "Máximo Gómez" Academy of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR) would have him as one of its pupils; the Border Brigade at Guantánamo as its first commander. Then came the request for assistance from the revolutionary movement for the liberation of Angola.

He went back and forth so many times

it is impossible to give an accurate count. His long service record includes exploratory missions, operations against bandits in Cuando Cubango, the battles of Cangamba and Cuito Cuanavale. That is how his life was spent from 1981 to 1990, during which he remained permanently in that country of Africa's southern cone until the total withdrawal of the Cuban internationalist troops.

He speaks nostalgically of the small amount of time he has been able to devote

to his family and to his children: Harry Andrés, now 32 years old; Gabil Ernesto, 21; Pombo Alejandro, who has turned 13; and Yara Celia, the lovely eight-year-old.

He has just celebrated his 55th birthday and Brigadier General Harry Villegas Tamayo, now head of the political section of the Western Army, has built up a history that is hard to equal. Nevertheless, he declares that he does not feel himself to be a hero. "I believe I have done the normal thing for a revolutionary. I always try to

Top left, miners carrying dynamite march in Oruro, Bolivia, Oct. 28, 1964, to protest police killings of student demonstrators the day before. Above, students in Oruro, Bolivia, assemble at barricades. One week later Gen. René Barrientos seized power in military coup.

At left, Cuban and Bolivian fighters during the Bolivian guerilla campaign. From left to right are: Coco Peredo, Ricardo, Loyola Guzmán, Inti Peredo.

act with the loyalty and selfless dedication to humanity that Fidel and Che taught me since adolescence."

He is not old, he says. For him the struggle has not ended and he will continue defending the immense accomplishments of the revolution.

"To those who think the revolution was not worth it, I say that if they could see how much respect we have around the world, if they could feel what I have felt when I visit another country to talk about Che, they would see that the world acknowledges that glory, which belongs to the entire Cuban people."



Courtesy Pathfinder Press



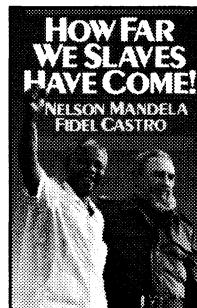
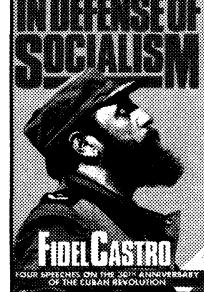
Verde Olivo/J. González
Cuban troops join battle against apartheid army in Angola (above). Top at left, Brigadier General Harry Villegas planning operations with other Cuban volunteers in Angola in the late 1980s.

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Support grows for Kmart workers' fight

BY JOAN PALTRINERI

GREENSBORO, North Carolina — Eight prominent Black ministers, a state representative, an assistant to North Carolina governor James Hunt, and the president of the Greensboro Poor People's Organization led a December 17 protest of 150 people to the entrance of the Super Kmart store here. When police in full riot gear told them to disperse, the ministers and political figures knelt in prayer, in a carefully planned civil disobedience action, until they were arrested.

The community protest, the most recent expression of growing support for the more than 500 workers at the Kmart distribution center here, thrust the battle for a union contract to the front page of the local big-business daily, the *News and Record*, for several days in a row.

"We want to prick the conscience of corporate America," Rev. William Wright told the press. Wright, one of those arrested, is the president of the Pulpit Forum, a prominent group of ministers, many of whom are from the Black community and support the Kmart workers.

"We're involved because the workers came to us," Rev. Gregory Headen, pastor of the Shiloh Baptist Church, said. "This is not just between corporate America and labor anymore. This is a community issue. These people are our congregations."

The distribution center workers, members of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE), have been engaged in the contract fight for more than two years. Pulpit Forum ministers recently launched a holiday boycott of three local Kmart stores with the union's backing. The boycott has helped build support for the fight in a city that is largely working-class and where many workers identify with the Kmart employees.

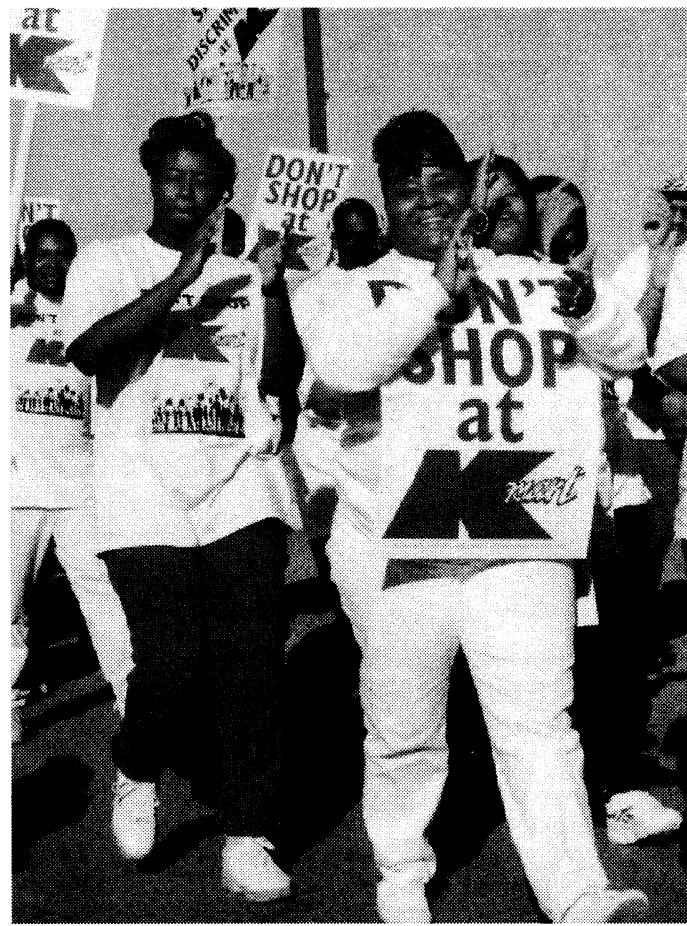
Kmart, a corporate Goliath with 2,167 stores across the United States and 147 in other countries, has refused to consider the union's demands for wage parity with other distribution centers, where workers are paid up to \$5 an hour more and receive additional paid holidays and sick days. Earlier this year, the company offered a 20-cent-an-hour raise, a 15-cent increase over the raise offered in negotiations last year. Unionists considered both proposals an insult.

The new round of protests came on the heels of a December 2 union rally that attracted more than 1,000 UNITE members and their supporters from throughout the southeast.

Most of those who joined the ministers on December 17 were members of several church congregations. Tom Hayes of the Faith Community Church said many from his congregation joined the protest after Sunday services. They first became interested in the Kmart workers' struggle when a member of the church who worked at the distribution center suffered a serious injury.

Another protester, Kathleen, explained why she supports the Kmart workers' demands for parity. "I work in a small office," she said. "I do the same work as all the men. I can't prove it, but I know I don't get the same wages. It's not right. Black women are definitely discriminated against."

With support for the fight growing steadily, pressure on local politicians and



Militant/Floyd Fowler

Kmart workers and supporters rally in Greensboro December 2 to demand a union contract. More than 1,000 attended.

businessmen to take sides has increased and divisions have surfaced.

"I certainly think there is an informal role for the mayor and city council to play," Mayor Carolyn Allen told the December 18 *News and Record*. "That basically boils down to urging Kmart to enter

been in business longer than the one here hardly explains an inferior wage structure."

Joan Paltrineri is a member of UNITE Local 2603 at the Greensboro Kmart Distribution Center.

Caterpillar workers say: 'The war's not over'

BY ANGEL LARISCY

PEORIA, Illinois — It's been a month since United Auto Workers (UAW) officials called off a strike against Caterpillar, Inc., by more than 9,000 union members in three states. Since then, discussion and debate continue every day on the lessons of the fight and its impact on organized labor and the entire working class.

The December 2 announcement by union officials that they were calling off the nearly 18-month-old strike came as workers were gathering to vote on the company's latest contract proposal. Many union members felt their vote on that offer would not carry much weight since UAW tops said the walkout was over no matter what the outcome of the ballot.

Caterpillar proposed a six-year agreement with no wage increases except cost-of-living adjustments, allowing 15 percent of the labor force to be made up of part-time and temporary workers, flexible schedules that would destroy the eight-hour day, weekend work without overtime pay, and elimination of some union representation rights.

Workers voted down the offer by 81 percent nationally. In Peoria, where the overwhelming majority of the strikers are, the vote was 97 percent against.

The back-to-work announcement was first heralded by the big-business press as a major blow against the UAW. "Union capitulation shows strike is now dull sword" read a headline in the December 5 *New York Times*. "The Caterpillar episode illustrates why strikes are becoming weak weapons," chimed in conservative columnist George Will in a nationally syndicated piece.

In the days and weeks since the strike ended, however, articles and editorials in the local press and other media have begun to assess the battle as an event with "no winners."

I consider myself a fighter

Unionists and their supporters, who kept the picket lines going for a year and a half and stood up to the company for more than five years, have their own opinions on the outcome of the struggle so far.

"We didn't lose; the war's not over," remarked Tom Smith, a member of UAW Local 974 who worked at Caterpillar's Mossville engine plant north of Peoria. "I

don't consider myself a loser," he continued. "I consider myself a fighter. I'm going back with my head up."

Many others now see going back to work as a chance to "regroup and rebuild" as Bill Hiatt, a 22-year employee with the construction equipment manufacturing giant, put it.

The most recent and longest walkout in the history of the UAW at Caterpillar came after three years of union members working without a contract. "The UAW bent over backwards to get along with Caterpillar between 1982 and 1992," Hiatt said. "But every contract since 1982 had concessions."

By the time the last contract expired in 1991, the company decided to push forward with attempts to more deeply gut workers' wages and benefits to make the company more competitive and increase profit rates.

Caterpillar presented the UAW with its "final offer," a proposal that called for the beginning of two tiers, no wage increases, concessions on health care, and rising job insecurity. Union members turned down the offer and walked off the job.

After striking for more than five months, UAW members were ordered back to work by union tops when Caterpillar announced it would implement its "final offer" and begin hiring replacements.

1992-94: fight continued on the job

Union members went back into the plants but did not give up the fight. Workers began to organize activities such as union T-shirt and button days, marches from the time clocks, and parking lot rallies.

In the fall of 1993, the union began a series of walkouts and one-day strikes to protest company firings and disciplinary actions against UAW members because of their union activity. By June 1994, the union had filed some 100 complaints against the company with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). On June 21 of that year, the UAW called an unfair labor practices strike, which presents legal barriers to the employers permanently replacing workers.

In the first few weeks of the walkout, more than 25 percent of the UAW membership crossed the picket lines. The com-

pany began production with these line crossers, management, and office personnel, as well as temporary and permanent new hires Caterpillar claimed it would have hired anyway. After those initial weeks of the strike, almost no other union members crossed despite repeated back-to-work campaigns by the company.

For over 17 months, unionists stood on picket lines and carried out activities such as weekly rallies at Caterpillar's General Offices (G.O.) in downtown Peoria, a series of mass pickets, and a solidarity rally on the one-year anniversary of the strike.

When union officials abruptly called the strike off, many workers were opposed to the decision. They felt, however, that even though they were going back to work under less than optimum conditions, they had accomplished something just by making clear their determination to stay out and fight.

Learned discipline on picket lines

Ron Heller, a UAW member who picketed weekly at the Mossville plant, said that during the recent strike union members learned that "at the picket lines we have to have discipline." The company had hired a security outfit called Vance that is known for its intimidating and provocative actions. Vance thugs used still and video cameras, listening devices,

and other tactics, so unionists had to be organized and visible but pay attention to how they conducted themselves.

Carol Cordle's husband Steve had over 25 years' seniority with Caterpillar when he was unjustly fired during the strike in 1995. Cordle said activities like those at the G.O. and the weekly rallies to greet management as they arrived at work had an impact. "Why else would they have built a skywalk to connect their two buildings and the parking garage?" she asked.

The strike supporter also commented that big rallies and pickets, like the one of over 350 people at the Mapleton plant on the one-year anniversary, showed that "we can have control."

Most strikers back on the job

The former strikers are now almost entirely back to work. They are returning under the conditions of the 1992 contract, since the company legally cannot impose its newest proposal with unfair labor practice complaints still pending.

Caterpillar has implemented a "code of conduct" that sharply limits the speech and conduct of returning workers. The new work rules prohibit clothing with any reference to the strike and include a ban on the word "scab."

Upon their return, workers are required

Continued on Page 14

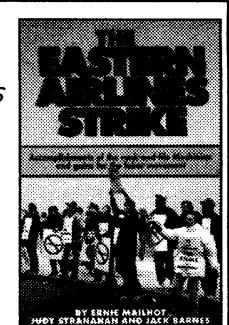
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The Eastern Airlines Strike

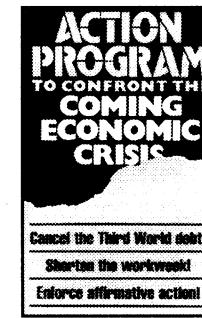
Accomplishments of the Rank-and-File Machinists

Ernie Mailhot, Judy Stranahan, and Jack Barnes

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BY ERNIE MAILHOT,
JUDY STRANAHAN AND JACK BARNES



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Des Moines newspaper slanders parole fight

Continued from front page

on top of the story, headed by the quote, "I just hope they don't bring Curtis back and parade him around town when he's released. We'd be back to square one..." The caption under the picture states, "Morris and his wife say the years of torment since the attack have consumed their lives."

For the past seven and a half years, Morris has collaborated in particular with an antilabor outfit known as the Workers League. This group's activities over the last 20 years have focused on a campaign of harassment and disruption of the Socialist Workers Party, which Curtis belongs to, as well as targeting unionists and other fighters involved in working-class struggles — from Eastern Airlines strikers to copper miners in Arizona. Since Curtis's arrest, this group has made a central feature of its activities a campaign to spread the frame-up and to attack anyone who speaks out in support of Curtis.

"We know the parole board couldn't keep him any longer," Keith Morris said Thursday as he talked about Curtis' pending release," the December 22 Register article said. "We are very grateful to the parole board for keeping him locked up as long as they legally could."

In the article, Morris repeats the charge that Curtis defenders were out to make money off the case. "Morris says the defense committee made a cottage industry out of Curtis's incarceration, accepting donations for the cause," Alex said.

Alex also quoted from a letter signed by Keith Morris in 1988 and widely distributed by the Workers League.

"The victim in this case is not Mark Curtis," Morris wrote," the Register says in its lengthy quote from the Morris letter. "It is Demetria (his daughter) and my entire family, who have been subjected to a national and international campaign claiming we are part of a police conspiracy to frame up Curtis.

"I would ask you, why would a black, working class family become involved in such a conspiracy?"

"The incredible thing about it, Morris said, is 'the police actually caught him with his pants down. Literally. He was convicted by a jury. And people still believe he was framed,'" Alex concluded.

This article appeared four days after the Pathfinder bookstore, where the Mark Curtis Defense Committee also holds many of its activities, was the target of an arson attack.

Curtis supporters respond

On January 1 the Register ran two letters from supporters of Curtis answering Alex's attack. The Register printed the two letters next to each other under the headline "Mark Curtis was a political prisoner."

One of the letters, heavily edited by the Register, was written by Harold Ruggless,

— CALENDAR —

GEORGIA

Atlanta

End the U.S. Blockade of Cuba. Tue., Jan. 9, March 6:30 p.m. Meet at Woodruff Park (Central City Park, Peachtree and Auburn). March to Ebenezer Church. Service 7 p.m. Ebenezer Baptist Church, 407 Auburn Ave. Keynote speaker: Reverend Lucius Walker, Jr., Executive Director, IFCO - Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization. For more information, call (404) 377-1983; (404) 526-8952; (404) 687-8323.

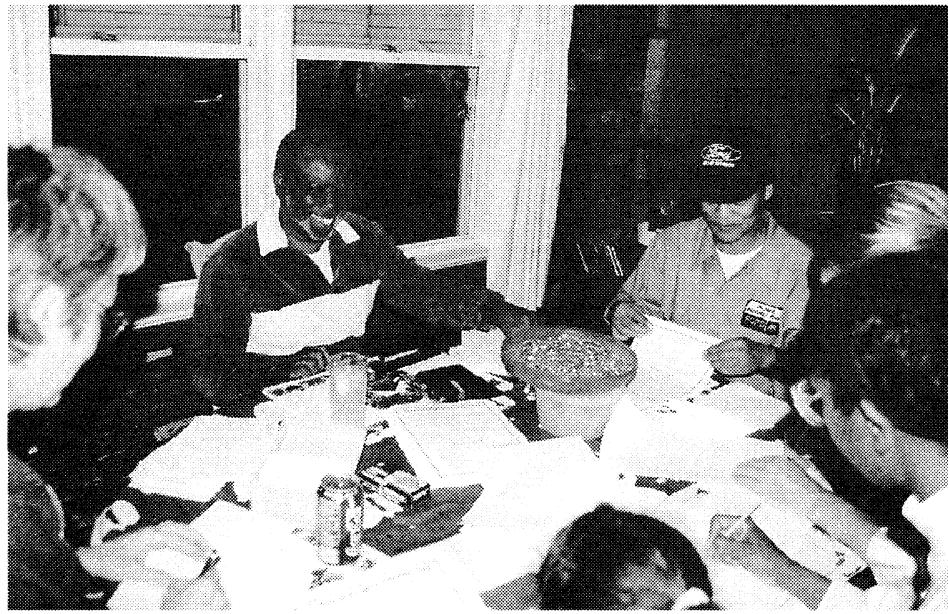
NEW YORK

Manhattan

Latino Coalition for Social Justice First Meeting of the Year. A conference in March for unity and struggle will be proposed. Sat., Jan. 13, 12 noon. Dominican Congress offices, 617 W. 179 St., 2nd floor. (Between St. Nicholas and Wadsworth Aves.).

Picket for Justice in the María Rivas Case. Demand the prosecution of police officer Frank Speringo, who killed María Rivas. Wed., Jan. 24, 9 to 10 a.m. Criminal Court, 100 Centre St. For more information on these events, please call Latino Coalition (212) 923-6031, 927-9065, 795-0379.

Town Meeting and Speakout Against Police Brutality. Fri., Jan. 19, 7 p.m. St., Mary's Church, 126th St. (bet. Amsterdam & Broadway). Spanish/English Translation. Sponsored by Ad Hoc Group Against Police Brutality. For more information, please call (718) 798-2466.



Autoworkers Rosben Shields (seated, left) and Ruby Naylor (on his right) help put out mailing for Mark Curtis parole campaign in Atlanta in December.

president of United Auto Workers Local 270, and protested the small amount of coverage given by the paper to the arson attack against the Pathfinder bookstore and office of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

"Those of us in the labor movement have often felt that The Register's coverage is slanted in favor of the big companies that seek to attack our wages, our standard of living and our unions to increase their profits and competitive position, all too often forcing us out on increasingly bitter strikes, such as those at Firestone and Caterpillar," Ruggless wrote.

"I urge The Register to give full coverage to this dangerous attack and to lend its weight to urging authorities to conduct a serious investigation, catch those responsible and prosecute them to the fullest extent of the law."

The other letter, written by Mark Curtis Defense Committee secretary-treasurer Hazel Zimmerman, took up the accusations in Alex's article.

"This article repeats the slanderous allegation that the Mark Curtis Defense Committee was set up as a 'cottage industry' to make money," wrote Zimmerman. "The idea that the community activists, unionists, and other defenders of political rights who formed the Mark Curtis Defense Committee had as their goal to make a profit off Curtis' conviction and more than seven long years in state prison is a ludicrous falsehood."

"The thousands of dollars we painstakingly raised from workers and farmers in Iowa and around the world were scrupu-

lously put to use to pay for legal expenses, for printing literature countering the police frame-up, for mailing that material far and wide, for rent and office expenses, and for traveling to speak before meetings and to win broader support from other fighters for justice — including the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee, the defenders of Mumia Abu-Jamal and victims of the British occupation of Northern Ireland.

"The Register article repeats the claim that the Iowa Parole Board kept Curtis 'locked up as long as they legally could.' This too is false. The board could have forced Mark to serve out his entire sentence," Zimmerman continued.

"Mark Curtis won his parole because

the longer he served the more it demonstrated that he was being treated differently because he was a union and political activist. More and more people were asking, 'Why is Mark Curtis still in prison?'"

"The release of Mark Curtis in the next month or so will be an important victory," Zimmerman concluded, "not only for Mark Curtis, but for all our political rights. Mark has applied to be paroled to Chicago, where his wife lives and works and where he has a number of job offers and the support of dozens of backers to help him. He looks forward to putting his victory in winning his freedom to use in support of others struggling for freedom and dignity."

Fund drive

Curtis supporters are campaigning to raise \$25,000 to prepare for challenges to Curtis in the future. The article in the Register, repeating slanders from the Workers League, shows there are forces waiting for Curtis's freedom to find new ways to attack him, his party, and political rights.

In the last week the defense committee has retained two lawyers in Chicago. Jed Stone, a criminal justice lawyer, will be working with Curtis to secure his parole and to attempt to minimize restrictions placed on him. Matt Piers, a well-known civil liberties and civil rights lawyer, has been retained as Curtis's general counsel to represent him against future attacks on his rights.

So far the defense committee has received a total of \$22,204 in pledges and contributions toward the fund drive, of which \$18,590 has been collected. To contribute, write to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311.

— MILITANT LABOR FORUMS —

(205) 323-3079.

FLORIDA

Miami

Farmworkers Fight for Dignity. Special video showing of the CBS 60 Minutes documentary on farmworkers: "Legacy of Shame." Guest speakers: farmworker activists from south Florida. Fri., Jan. 12, 7:30 p.m. 137 N.E. 54th St. Donation: \$3. Translation into Spanish. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

PENNSYLVANIA

Pittsburgh

The Next Stage in the Fight for Justice for Jonny Gammage. Speakers: Malcolm Jarrett, activist in recent Gammage protests, member of Young Socialists; others. Fri., Jan. 12, 7:30 p.m. 1103 E. Carson St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (412) 381-9785.

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Shrinking name — Xmas note from a Minneapolis friend: "My employer, 3M, just decided to join the list of downsizers. They sloughed off one of their three operating divisions. Now co-workers say we work for '2M.'"



Harry
Ring

For a prosperous new year — Bloomberg Business News service reported that thousands of U.S. workers would be getting pink slips instead of bonuses this past Xmas period. Explained a

consulting economist: "This is the time of year when you're figuring out how to make a profit next year."

Oh — "The popular conception seems to be that American slavery as an institution involved white slave owners and black slaves. Consequently it is easy to view slavery as a racist institution." — The book *The End of Racism*, by Dinesh D'Souza, which opines that slavery was good for the slaves.

'Our' government? — Ongoing disclosures forced Washington to admit that for years patients were subjected, without their knowledge, to radiation experiments. Now the federal Advisory Committee on Human Radiation Experiments recommends com-

pensation in cases where claimants can establish they were "deliberately" misled, or that there was no medical benefit to the treatment and that they were harmed by it.

They're not really stingy — The feds spent \$22 million researching the secret radiation experiments, including \$6.2 million to the committee that came up with the shyster formula for settling claims. The 14 committee members were paid \$462 a day.

Like fighting City Hall — Relatives of victims of the secret radiation experiments will find it tough going to get much out of the CIA, which claims that "it was unable to retrieve any of its records of its participation in the mid-century panels that met in secret

to discuss, among other things, human experiments," according to the federal advisory committee.

Shucks — If we weren't attending the socialist educational conference, and New Years party, in Seattle, we could have grabbed a flight to New York for the special party deal at the Plaza. A lift to the hotel in a chauffeur-driven Rolls Royce (\$1,200), a night in the Presidential suite (\$15,000), and breakfast in bed (\$35). Noise-makers extra.

Kind of like apartment-sharing — Police investigators dug into a grave at Maryland National Park and found not one but two bodies buried there. Cemetery officials attributed the double sale of the plot to "human error." Industry critics say cemeteries take

decades-old unmarked plots, often in choice locations, resell them, and bury the new body over the earlier occupant.

Esthetics dep't — "Rhinoplasty is the most common pageant cosmetic surgery. The goal of nasal cosmetic surgery is to create a nose that is complimentary to other features.... The cost of rhinoplasty in Arkansas is surprisingly reasonable." — Little Rock plastic surgeons James Billie and Roger Anderson.

Thought for the week — "I believe in my cosmetics line. There are plenty of charities for the homeless. Isn't it time someone helped the homely?" — Cosmetics purveyor Dolly Parton.

Guadalajara book fair: high interest in socialist books

BY MARK FRIEDMAN

GUADALAJARA, Mexico — "What are you doing here? I didn't know there was a publisher like this in the United States! I thought socialism was dead! Are you afraid the U.S. government will do something to you?" These were the rapid-fire questions asked by Berta Muñoz to the volunteers staffing the Pathfinder Press booth at the Guadalajara international book fair. Muñoz got so excited she helped promote Pathfinder books and other revolutionary literature.

Scores of youth came by for books on the Cuban revolution. Many had their interest piqued by recent revelations about the burial site in Bolivia of Ernesto Che Guevara, one of the central leaders of the Cuban revolution.

The book fair here, which took place November 25-December 3, is the largest international exhibition of books and periodicals in the Americas. More than 850 publishers from over 25 countries participated, displaying 75,000 titles. Most publishers came from Latin America, Spain, and the United States. Some 100,000 people from Mexico visited the week-long fair, as well as hundreds of book industry professionals.

A team of workers and youth from Los Angeles, Salt Lake City, San Francisco, and two cities in Mexico staffed the Pathfinder booth. This is the second year the publisher has participated in the fair. The booth featured the *Nueva Internacional* series, the Spanish-language edition of the Marxist magazine *New International*.

Twenty-two copies of *Nueva* were sold

at the fair, making it the top seller. The magazine's latest issue, featuring the article "Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War" by Jack Barnes, was the most popular, largely because of interest generated by the impact on Mexico of the worldwide depression and the ongoing fight by peasants for land in the southern state of Chiapas.

In all, Pathfinder supporters sold more than \$500 worth of books at the fair. This is significant, given the rolling devaluation of the Mexican peso, which now stands at 7.5 to the U.S. dollar compared to a rate of 3.5 to 1 a year earlier.

Ernesto and Claudia, two Mexicans at the fair who did not want their last names used, gave a concrete example of the impact of the sharpening economic crisis. In order to cover child care and rent for a modest apartment, they said, you need to hold a job paying four times the minimum wage of 18 pesos per day.

Pooled money to buy books

Many of the books at the fair cost between 50 and 90 pesos, even at discounted prices. Radicalizing students and workers often commented that they needed to buy copies of *Nueva Internacional* or Pathfinder titles such as *Habla Malcolm X* (Malcolm X speaks), despite the economic squeeze. Often, several people would collectively scrape together the equivalent of one to three days' pay to buy one of these books at the Pathfinder booth.

A number of people who purchased Pathfinder books last year returned for more this time. Ricardo from Guadalajara had bought *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's Cold War against Cuba Doesn't End* at a bookstore in Anchorage, Alaska, last summer. He said he appreciated that book and bought *Nueva Internacional* no. 2 featuring a series of articles on Che Guevara, Cuba, and the road to socialism.

Pathfinder representative Toba Singer, who works in a library in San Francisco, spoke at the bilingual teachers workshop at the fair. A number of teachers who attended asked for suggestions on books to use in their work and got copies of the Pathfinder catalog.

More than 30 publishing enterprises from Cuba participated in the fair. Their booths were constantly busy, selling a large number of books, tapes, and T-shirts.

Pathfinder supporters worked with representatives of *La Gaceta de Cuba*, the magazine on culture and politics of the National Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba, to promote and sell subscriptions to that publication. Pathfinder distributes *La Gaceta* in North America. Norberto Codina, editor of the magazine, attended the fair and spoke at a workshop that helped promote *La Gaceta*. He also spoke at a reception hosted by Pathfinder supporters. Some 45 copies of *La Gaceta* were sold at the fair and hundreds of librarians were introduced to the magazine here.

During the fair, socialist workers and others staffing the Pathfinder booth took time off to visit the University of Guadalajara, where they spoke to several professors and representatives of the school library about purchasing Pathfinder books. The student government sponsored a presentation by Roberto Molina on *Nueva In-*



March 8, 1995, rally in Mexico City demanding the government withdraw troops from Chiapas. Depression has stirred peasant-labor resistance, interest in socialism.

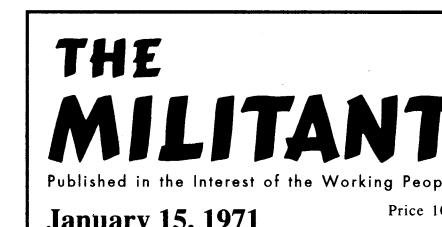
ternacional.

Twenty-five students came and joined in an exchange on the Cuban revolution and the conditions facing the working class in the United States. As a result, half a dozen students decided to begin a dis-

cussion group on *Nueva Internacional* no. 2.

Mark Friedman is an airline worker and member of the International Association of Machinists in Los Angeles.

- 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO -



NEW YORK — In a landmark decision Dec. 21, the U.S. Supreme Court extended the right to vote in federal elections to approximately 22 million Americans who are presently disenfranchised. It did so by upholding the constitutionality of the law passed by Congress last June and signed into law by President Nixon on June 22.

The three provisions of the voting rights amendments of 1970 which the Court upheld were to 1) lower the voting age to 18; 2) abolish residency requirements of longer than 30 days; and 3) outlaw literacy tests for voting.

This was an important decision. Above all, it reflects the impact of the growing radicalization of young people.

The actual outcome of each election is, however, far from the only — or even necessarily the main — factor. Whatever the outcome, this law opens up many new possibilities for revolutionary socialists.

Their campaigns are more apt to appeal to young people than most, for example. "To be eligible to vote and to be qualified to vote means little if there is no one on the ballot worth voting for," the *New York Times* editorialized Dec. 26. Not only are revolutionary-socialist candidates worth voting for, they are worth working for. This law will facilitate their efforts to reach young people with a program for revolutionary change.

The right to vote without the right to

hear all candidates — including revolutionary candidates — is also meaningless. Adoption of this law will make it easier for college and high school students to force their administrations to provide a platform for all political points of view.



January 12, 1946

STAMFORD, Conn., Jan. 3 — In an inspiring and dramatic demonstration of labor solidarity, the entire union movement here, both AFL and CIO, joined forces today to bring this industrial city of 65,000 population to a standstill in a city-wide strike. This mighty one-day general strike, beginning at 12 noon, was called by the Stamford Combined Labor Organizations, representing some 30 local unions.

A united working class thus demonstrated its awe-inspiring power to aid the 3,000 embattled AFL Machinists in their bitter two-months' strike against the labor-hating Yale & Towne Manufacturing Company. They protested against the strike-breaking use of state troops sent last week by Governor Baldwin to help Yale & Towne President W. Gibson Carey, Jr., the "Sewell Avery of Stamford."

During the strike demonstration, practically everything was shut down tight. Transportation came virtually to a dead stop. Even workers from movies, bars, bakeries and stores flocked to the town square to join the demonstrators. Firm and serious in tone, the singing, shouting workers nevertheless gave the town a gay, holiday spirit. Their self-confidence and militancy pervaded the atmosphere.

Fight NATO's war drive!

As U.S. troops and heavy armor continue to move into Bosnia, the Clinton administration has won grudging support among capitalist politicians for its military deployment against Yugoslavia. With the initial U.S. forces now in Bosnia, Democratic and Republican congresspeople alike are joining the chorus to "get the job done" in the U.S.-led drive toward war against Yugoslavia by the imperialist powers that make up NATO. The White House has used the first U.S. military casualty, from a December 30 mine explosion, to ratchet up the bipartisan war propaganda another notch.

"Stop NATO's war drive: Emulate the Cuban revolution!" was the title of talks opening the New Year's weekend socialist educational conferences in the United States.

Putting in practice the spirit of that title is what all who are opposed to imperialist oppression and capitalist exploitation should place at the center of their activity over the coming weeks.

Working-class fighters must stand up to the war pressures and clearly explain to fellow fighters the enormous stakes in the growing European conflict. This is a prerequisite to building a working-class movement that can mount a revolutionary struggle to take political power out of the hands of the wealthy rulers and their governments, who are organizing a war on working people at home and abroad.

Europe has moved to the center of world politics. The sharpest class conflicts are now unfolding there. Their motor force is the intensifying rivalry between Washington, Paris, Bonn, London, and other imperialist powers as they vie for control of markets to boost their sagging profit rates. This interimperialist competition — like that proceeded World War II — will only get more fierce as world capitalism descends further into the depression signaled by the 1987 stock market crash.

The brigands in Washington, Bonn, Paris, and London are simply fighting over spots on the feeding chain of the imperialist system of robbery. In Europe, Washington stands on top of the feeding chain. Bonn is unquestionably second. But Paris is fighting London for the third place. This is what the Juppé plan of austerity was all about: slashing the social wage and cutting the value of labor power enough to gain a competitive edge over the British crown. One's particular place in this feeding chain brings with it more loot from the competing predators. Bonn's push to bring Turkey into the European Community's fold, for example, is another not-so-subtle attempt by the German imperialists to scrape off more of the surplus value produced by the working class in that country.

The trouble for all the imperialist scoundrels is that working people keep upsetting their plans. This is what the labor revolt in France last fall's strike wave in Turkey signified. It is this working-class resistance that is at the center of why imperialism will not have an easy time accomplishing its goal of reestablishing capitalism in Yugoslavia — with all its army divisions and heavy armor. Reflecting the imperial arrogance of the top brass

of the U.S. occupying force, the *Wall Street Journal* quotes a U.S. colonel who likens the "mission" to 19th century "expeditions to enforce treaties, keep the Indians quiet, keep open supply lines, [and] keep settlers out of the Black Hills." Adds the colonel, "I consider this Indian Country." "Keeping the Indians quiet" and "subduing the American West" is language, as even a casual reader of American history knows, used to cover over the brutal genocidal war against the Native Americans and the replacement of their primitive society and social relations with that of rising capitalism. The NATO forces will also run into resistance from workers and farmers in Yugoslavia as imperialism seeks to mount another war. This war is aimed at returning the domination of capital and doing away with the nationalized property relations and social expectations that grew out of the powerful Yugoslav revolution.

The stated goal of the NATO warlords is to bring peace to those uncivilized people in the Balkans who have supposedly been fighting each other for centuries. Their real aim is to bring Yugoslavia back to the imperialist system of exploitation, and set a powerful example for reestablishing capitalism through naked military force throughout Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

Those who are engaged in struggle today, such as striking workers in Detroit and elsewhere, fighters for Black freedom and the independence of Quebec, youth and workers involved in mobilizations to stop the French government's drive against the social wage, those protesting to defend affirmative action and abortion rights, and others have a vital stake today in digging in and learning the truth about imperialism's war aims. These struggles are at the center of the resistance to imperialism's march toward fascism and war.

Members and supporters of the Young Socialists and the Socialist Workers Party have mapped out plans to carry out a working-class campaign against imperialism and its war drive against Yugoslavia. Readers of the *Militant* can join with them in this effort. Central to this is deeper involvement in the working class and its struggles, participation in social protest action by youth and the oppressed, selling revolutionary books and literature, establishing weekly plant-gate sales, and getting to picket lines. Socialists who are in industrial unions will be holding national meetings over the next month to discuss experiences in taking this campaign to unionists, and reaching out from there to others in struggle.

Revolutionary-minded workers and youth have important tools to use in order to get out the truth in this campaign: *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War*, by Ernesto Che Guevara; *New International* no. 7, with the article "Opening Guns of World War III," which describes the working-class campaign against the assault on Iraq; *The Truth About Yugoslavia — Why Working People Should Oppose Intervention*; and a range of titles advertised in this week's *Militant*.

Now is the time to tell the truth about the Yugoslav revolution and fight NATO's war drive uncompromisingly!

Turkey wracked by instability

Continued from back page
tively.

The fascist Nationalist Action Party, which held 17 seats in the previous parliament, barely exceeded 8 percent of the vote, short of the 10 percent needed to be represented in the new legislature.

All these parties are in basic agreement on the need to continue the bosses' attacks on the wages and living conditions of working people. But in face of determined labor resistance the rulers and their parties have been divided over how far to push their austerity drive dictated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the imperialists of Washington, Bonn, and Tokyo.

The bosses' assault intensified last year after the 1994 plunge of Turkey's economy into its deepest recession in decades. Gross Domestic Product dropped by 8.6 percent while the Turkish lira was sharply devalued. In 1995 inflation ran at over 80 percent and Ankara's foreign debt jumped to nearly \$74 billion.

The current government crisis was produced by Turkey's longest nationwide strike actions in more than 15 years. Hundreds of thousands of workers in major industries, as well as civil service employees, walked out September 20. The workers made wage gains through their strikes, which lasted over a month and disrupted the employers' plans.

Faced with this fightback by working people, Ciller resigned as prime minister for the first time, following the withdrawal of the social-democratic CHP from the governing coalition.

During the strike, Ebarkan's, Yilmaz's and Ecevit's opposition parties gave lip service to the demands of the workers, calling for a "more fair" settlement than the one offered by Ciller's regime.

The "shock therapy" austerity measures proposed by Ciller's government included privatization of unprofitable state-owned businesses, mass layoffs, and cuts in

wages and social services. Unable to form a new government after the break-up of the governing coalition, Ciller was forced to call early elections.

On December 13, with Germany's rulers in the lead, the European Parliament decided to accept Ankara's application to join the customs union. The customs union would harmonize tariff rates between Turkey and the European Union. The EU accounts for 50 percent of Turkey's exports and imports and the country is heavily dependent on trade with Germany.

Ciller's DYP, the ANAP, and the CHP gave strong support to Turkey's entry into the EU. Ecevit, of the Democratic Left party, called for the "renegotiation of the terms of the agreement" so that "they will not undermine Turkey's national independence."

Refah party leaders have stated they oppose Turkey's integration in the EU. Instead the Welfare Party has called for an "Islamic common market from Kazakhstan to Morocco." Refah uses radical populist demagogic to further its stated goal to establish an "Islamic Republic." It also demands that Turkey pull out of NATO. It has opposed imperialist intervention in Iraq and has called for the removal of U.S. and all foreign military bases from Turkey and the whole region. In the past it has also been against the Ciller government's privatization campaign.

After the elections, Refah vice-president Abdulah Gul stated that his party "has no intention of separating and isolating Turkey from the West. We want to develop our relations with Europe." Gul promised the imperialist investors that a Refah government will pay off Turkey's foreign debt as well as continue the privatization campaign.

Before the elections Erbakan had promised to "tear up" the EU agreement. But he quickly changed his tune, stating that "we are not against the customs union. We are against the ... views of the agreement."

Caterpillar fight

Continued from Page 11

to attend a four-hour orientation session. A worker who was in one of the first groups to be called back at the Mossville plant said the company is bringing back a few workers at a time to attempt to control the situation. His group was made up of eight workers and 15 management and supervisory personnel. "It had the immediate impact of intimidation," he said.

Fay Vogelsang has 21 years at Caterpillar and works at the Mapleton foundry. She says during all these years she thought there was a decent relationship between Mapleton management and the workers.

When she returned to work the week before Christmas, Vogelsang said, "emotions were high on both sides — the strikers and line crossers and temporary workers." Everyone was apprehensive, she stated. "That first day back I was trained by a temporary" who was let go at the end of the week, she said. A week before Christmas, all of the 600 workers at the Mapleton foundry were back on the job. At some other facilities it has taken longer.

So far there are reports of more than two dozen firings and suspensions of unionists since their return to work. The company has also fired some line crossers.

Hiatt, who will be returning to work at the HH plant in East Peoria, thinks that the company is unlikely to fire large numbers of union militants for fear the sackings might ignite another explosion. "I don't think there's a master strategy," he said. "The company is wondering as much as anyone how this will turn out."

Claims in the big-business press that the strike tool is no longer an effective weapon are "probably as far from the truth as they can get," said worker Tom Smith. He noted the union does face a challenge with Caterpillar opening new plants in North Carolina and Tennessee that are nonunion.

The debate goes on in the pages of the bourgeois press.

"The best option is the one that labor is often reluctant to take seriously for fear it will be abused: cooperation," said a December 17 editorial in the Peoria *Journal Star*. "Unions and managers who disagree on everything else can generally agree on one thing: it's important for the employer to be strong and profitable."

In a letter to the editor published in the December 23 *Journal Star*, Carroll Williams of Canton, Illinois, took issue with this view. "A lot of people do not realize that this is not just a dispute between Caterpillar and the UAW," Williams wrote. "This is a struggle between two different ideologies and is about class distinction."

"But, the thing is, while the lowly worker is improving his lot, the corporations are still making piles of money," the letter continued. "And the amount of money some of the drones on Caterpillar's dole make is obscene. They produce nothing. The only thing Caterpillar has to sell is produced by union members."

Many workers are also discussing the question of leadership of their union. Most workers interviewed were angry at the UAW tops' decision to end the strike without any consultation or discussion.

"The union leadership should keep people advised, not out there in the dark," said Smith.

"My frustration lies not with my immediate co-workers — union line crossers or temporary — nor with my local union. My frustration lies with the powers that be on the 7th floor of the G.O. and the international union in Detroit," said Vogelsang.

'We are the union'

More rank-and-file members taking responsibility for the union, however, is what Vogelsang pointed to as the way forward.

"I was not active in the union before," she said. "As most weren't. This needs to be changed." As the former strikers return on the job, Vogelsang said, "We need to find ways to talk to the new hires and temps. My dispute is not with the line crossers. When you start picking each other off you're going to have less people in your own army."

Others point to how the union has won some gains for workers over the years. "Steve always said, 'The only thing Caterpillar ever gave me was a calendar — the rest I had to earn,'" said Carol Cordle, referring to her husband. "But now," Steve Cordle piped in, "they've given me an attitude. I'm never going to forget what this company has done."

What's going on now is another stage in the fight against Caterpillar, noted UAW member Heller. "When people fight for their rights, they're going to meet all kinds of walls in their battles. Sometimes you have to get together, regroup, and find another way to get over the wall. That's where we are at today."

Heller's determination to find a way to continue the struggle is marked by his confidence in the union membership.

He recounts a story of driving to a picket line rally last summer when he was pulled over by a state trooper for allegedly having a boat in the back of his truck that was two inches past the legal limit.

In the course of their interaction, the trooper told Heller he should just go stay at the union hall and let the elected union officials deal with the strike instead of him and others taking to the streets.

"I told him at the time, 'I am the union,'" Heller said, "and I still feel that way today."

Angel Lariscy is a member of UAW Local 1494 in Peoria.

Detroit newspaper strikers remain determined

BY JOHN SARGE

DETROIT — After six months of a wearing confrontation with the bosses, 2,000 workers on strike against this city's two dailies, the *News* and *Free Press*, remain determined in their struggle for union rights and dignity. A number of workers are becoming battle-tested veterans of the labor movement in the process.

Protests against the union-busting drive of the newspapers continue to occur. Hundreds of strikers and their supporters leaflet stores advertising in the struck papers.

The Saturday before Christmas a delegation of workers from the *Toledo Blade* came to Detroit to take part. Members of the Utility Workers Union also went door-to-door in a working-class area surrounding a Super Kmart store in suburban Detroit urging a store boycott.

Twelve strike supporters, including seven University of Michigan students, were arrested December 17 while protesting the presentation of an honorary degree to retiring *Free Press* publisher Neal Shine.

The 12 were among several dozen who stood as Shine was introduced. They unfurled a banner reading "U-M Honored Scabs" and began singing "Solidarity Forever." Others in attendance stood with their backs to the podium or shouted "Shame on Shine" and booed during the presentation. Protesters also leafleted many of the 2,000 people in attendance. The leaflet included a mock diploma conferring a "Degree of Guilt" on Shine "for achievements in union busting and injustice against Detroit newspaper strikers."

In the first mass picket line since De-

cember 1, more than 200 strikers and their supporters turned out at 6:30 a.m. on December 28 in front of the editorial offices of the *News*. When asked why the unions called this protest Lou Mleczko, president of striking Newspaper Guild Local 22, said, "To let the newspapers know that we're still around."

Management is belligerent

Talks between the bosses and the unions, called for by Detroit mayor Dennis Archer, Michigan senator Carl Levin, and Catholic Cardinal Adam Maida, broke off December 20. The companies refused to budge from their earlier position.

"Management's belligerent position put forth today is what the six striking unions have faced since talks began last winter. Gannett and Knight-Ridder have again shown their total contempt for the local community," said a statement by the Detroit Metropolitan Council of Newspaper Unions, which represents the strikers.

John Jaske, lead negotiator for the papers, told the unions that they had to agree that replacement workers would not be fired to allow strikers to return. He also demanded that strikers drop their demand for amnesty for workers accused of picket line misconduct.

Jaske said strikers had to understand that future working conditions "must reflect the current operation" at the newspapers. If the unions accept, the bosses offered to set up a \$2 million fund to help strikers retrain or relocate to new jobs. The company would also establish a preferential hiring list of strikers for any future job openings.

People got a glimpse of current operations at the struck newspapers a week ear-

lier.

"Used, abused, and hung out to dry." That is how Donna Prestage said she felt after three months as a replacement carrier for the newspapers.

The 'used and abused'

She and dozens of carriers recruited from other areas were laid off because they were too expensive to maintain. They received a housing allowance and almost double the pay carriers previously made. Prestage and her husband came here from Hattiesburg, Mississippi, where they were both working toward professional licenses.

Prestage along with three other recently laid-off replacement carriers described conditions at a press conference organized by the striking unions. Carriers worked 16-hour days, seven days a week, with no breaks and no days off. They were so tired, she said, that they sometimes fell asleep while driving their routes. They were also subjected to verbal and sexual abuse by circulation managers.

William Prestage said that on some days carriers were given 1,000 papers, far more than they could deliver on time. At times, he said, the number of papers they were given deliberately exceeded the number of customers in their assigned area. "The way it would end up," he said, "we'd trash them or throw them out to just everybody."

Conditions like these may explain why John Curley, the chairman of Gannett Co., corporate parent of the *Detroit News*, unloaded \$3.2 million in stock in late November just as fourth-quarter performance numbers were being updated.

Despite numerous management predictions that the strike was over or that the

unions would collapse during the holidays, the newspapers now project greater fourth-quarter losses than they experienced in the third quarter.

Pretax losses and missed profits will exceed \$200 million in 1995, all due to the strike. The company also expects to lose \$100 million in 1996 if the strike continues, according to recent corporate financial statements.

Two recent actions indicating the weakness of the newspapers continue to buoy the spirits of strikers. The first are reports that discounted advertising rates would end after Christmas. These have been the norm since July 13, the start of the strike. Strikers expect an exodus of advertisers when prices go up.

The newspapers also just mailed 90,000 collection letters to customers who haven't paid their bills since the strike began. At least one Detroit area lawyer who cut off delivery in July has threatened to take action against the papers. He reportedly informed a customer service representative, "If I had done something like that, billing people in the mail for a service I didn't provide, I would be guilty of mail fraud."

The National Labor Relations Board has issued four new complaints against the two newspapers. The charges focus on the way the *News* implemented "merit" pay thereby sparking the strike.

Others include the company's use of threats to try to get editorial workers to cross the picket lines, and the refusal of the newspapers to supply the unions with requested information during negotiations.

John Sarge is a member of United Auto Workers Local 900 in Detroit.

LETTERS

Lies on Che Guevara

Like most readers of the *Militant*, I had never heard of Daniel M. Collier or his "book on revolution" until I read his letter to the *New York Times* challenging the response by Mary-Alice Waters to the latest round of lies published in the *Times* claiming that a political division existed between Che Guevara and Fidel Castro.

On the basis of third-hand knowledge, allegedly from a discussion with a Bolivian army officer, Collier tried to back up what the *Times* sees fit to print on this question (see "Lies in the *Times* on Che Guevara and the Cuban revolution" in the Dec. 18, 1995, *Militant*; and "The *New York Times*, Che Guevara, and the Cuban revolution: a further exchange" in the Dec. 25, 1995, *Militant*).

The university catalogue here in Pittsburgh lists a single item by Daniel M. Collier, a slim book entitled *Revolutionism*, co-authored with Abdul A. Said and published in Boston (Abdul A. Said and Daniel M. Collier, *Revolutionism*, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1971).

Readers may be interested in the following sentences from the book's introduction: "Daniel Collier has coauthored this book not in his capacity as an officer in the Armed Forces or as a member of the faculty of the United States Military Academy, but as an individual concerned with the contemporary nature of revolution. His views are his own and do not necessarily reflect his official affiliations."

According to the University of Pittsburgh catalogue this is the only thing Collier ever published. There is no other biographical information on him or his coauthor.

Curious about what kind of take a U.S. Military Academy employee would have on revolution, I began to read the book. But I had to give up after a dozen pages of total gibberish.

It's illuminating to see the kind of "sources" the big-business press unearths to raise a hullabaloo and keep on reiterating lies

on the off-chance that something may stick.
Matilde Zimmermann
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Internment of Japanese

I enjoyed reading the article about "How Roosevelt provoked Tokyo's attack," in the December 11 *Militant*. It may be purely subjective on my part but there is more debate about how that war [started] than ever before. I noticed it during the anniversary memorials around the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Recently I came across a section in Ronald Takaki's book about migrants in California, *Strangers from a Different Shore*, which looks at the Asian migration to the United States and is worthwhile reading.

In the chapter on "The Watershed of World War II," Takaki footnotes Peter Irons's book *Justice at War: The Story of the Japanese Internment Cases* (New York, 1983), p. 20 and says:

President Roosevelt was willing to make a tremendous hole in the Constitution. In fact, he had been considering the internment of Japanese Americans for a long time.

On August 10, 1936, President Roosevelt had written a memorandum to the Chief of Naval Operations: "One obvious thought occurs to me — that every Japanese citizen or non-citizen on the island of Oahu who meets these Japanese ships or has any connection with their officers or men should be secretly but definitely identified and his or her name placed on a special list of those who would be the first to be placed in a concentration camp in the event of trouble."

Thus, five years before the attack on Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt was already devising a plan for the imprisonment of Japanese aliens and citizens in

a "concentration camp" without due process of law P. 390.

Takaki does not pursue the reasons for Roosevelt's thinking. World War II is mythologized as the last popular war in the U.S. because it fought the fascists.

Too little is said about the U.S. capitalist support to fascists in Spain, and in Germany. I still recall arguments about how Mussolini in Italy made the trains run on time.

Franklin D. Roosevelt, like his uncle Teddy Roosevelt, was a conscious builder of the American empire. C. Frank Glass was right on the mark 50 years ago when he pointed out the war guilt of the Wall Street brigands and their government in Washington.

I must also say that it's been a real treat to get news about Puerto Rico from Ron Richards's reports to the *Militant*. Right on!

Catarino Garza
Modesto, California

U.S. entry into WWII

Thanks to the *Militant* for the timely article, "How Roosevelt

CARTOONIST'S VIEW



provoked Tokyo's attack on Pearl Harbor," in the issue dated Dec. 11, 1995.

On page 134 of the Pathfinder book *Labor's Giant Step* author Art Preis makes a reference to a book entitled, *President Roosevelt and the Coming of the War: A Study in Appearances and Reality*.

This book by author Charles Beard goes into extreme detail on war preparations by Washington preceding its entry into World War II. The strategy of the U.S. policy was "maneuvering the Japanese into firing the first shot" — as it became known in the Roosevelt cabinet.

Other issues in Mr. Beard's book include:

1) The anti-war rhetoric of the Democratic Party platform of 1940.

2) How the once powerful isolationist and anti-war groups were manipulated into supporting the war effort.

3) U.S. aggression toward Japan including the freezing of all Japanese assets, denunciation of the Japanese trade treaty of 1911 and the embargo on export of nu-

merous strategic materials like scrap iron.

4) The rejection of a Pacific conference with the Japanese Premier in August 1941.

5) The secret conference held between Roosevelt and Churchill in August 1941 which demanded equal access to raw materials in Asia (specifically rubber from Malaysia and chromium from Manchuria).

6) Through the interception of messages, such as the famous "winds message," the U.S. government realized that Japanese proposals were a last ditch effort before aggression and in fact knew that Pearl Harbor was coming.

Much of the material in the book is taken from the Congressional Joint Committee at war's end. Those interested in the *Militant* article of 12/11/95 will find this book by Mr. Beard to be most illuminating.

Combining the Beard book with Art Preis's work, documenting the role of the Stalinists in the U.S. labor movement at that time, one can have no trouble understanding how the U.S. working class was dragged into fighting the war.

Robert Kissinger

Chicago, Illinois

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged.

Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Turkey: elections signal instability

BY BOBBIS MISAILIDES

ATHENS, Greece — Instability. That is the watchword in Turkey since the December 24 elections in that country.

Necmettin Erbakan's Welfare Party (Refah) received the largest vote — 21.3 percent — and captured 158 of the total 550 seats in parliament. This upset registered widespread resentment among working people against the austerity measures of the other major capitalist parties that have been in government over the last decade.

The vote for Refah, described in the big-business media as the party of "Islamic fundamentalism," prompted worried comments by ruling-class spokespeople from Bonn to Washington.

After a similar development in Algeria four years ago, the army there annulled the election results and declared martial law with the backing of Paris, setting the stage for a bloody civil war that has claimed the lives of more than 40,000 people.

None of the Turkish capitalist parties

received substantial enough votes to form the kind of stable government Ankara needs for the rulers there to press their austerity drive against working people, as well as continue the more than a decade-long war against Turkey's Kurdish population.

Prime minister Tansu Ciller's True Path Party (DYP) received 19.48 percent of the vote and 135 seats. Ciller resigned after the elections but announced she will try to form a governing coalition.

She is courting the major conservative opposition group, the Motherland Party (ANAP) led by Mesut Yilmaz, which came in second with 19.69 percent but won three seats less than Ciller's party. The coalition will have to include a third bourgeois party, probably the social democrats.

The two social-democratic parties, Bulent Ecevit's party of the Democratic Left and Deniz Baykal's People's Republican Party (CHP), won 75 and 50 seats respectively.

Continued on Page 14



Striking miners at a protest rally of 3,000 on Sept. 28, 1995. Hundreds of thousands of workers joined in strike actions, the longest-lasting in 15 years. The walkouts were provoked by austerity measures the Ciller government tried to impose. The labor fightback forced Ciller to back down and provoked a crisis for the ruling class.

Greek gov't tramples on students' democratic rights

BY NATASHA TERLEXIS

ATHENS, Greece — "What does the flag symbolize for you?" asked the presiding judge. "If you claim it's an old rag, then how do you explain that people have tears in their eyes when [Greek weight lifting champion Pyros] Dímas raises the Greek flag in foreign countries? Do you have tears in your eyes? Aren't you Greek?"

This is the kind of courtroom questioning that permeated a summary trial here December 14. That day the court convicted 101 youth for their involvement in events on November 17 — the 22nd anniversary of the student uprising at the Polytechnic school against the military junta.

The youth, most of whom called themselves anarchists, were among 126 arrested by riot police on November 17 and charged with disturbing the peace, destroying a national symbol by burning Greek flags, and causing damage to the Polytechnic school. The campus is the major center of political activity in the Greek capital.

Most of the youth did not show up for the trial and were sentenced to 40 months in prison. A few who appeared in court and testified were given four-month sentences.

The trial was conducted without defense attorneys. When the court announced it would try the defendants in groups of 25, the Lawyers Association of Athens decided to abstain in protest. Neither the police nor the government provided any witnesses identifying any particular individual for any specific act. "Their presence at the scene is sufficient," stated the public prosecutor.

Most of the defendants are now free pending appeal and may be allowed to buy out their sentences. Approximately a dozen have arbitrarily not been granted bail and are in jail.

The mass arrests came after police special forces entered the university grounds, which are legally protected from cop incursions through the university asylum. "It is unacceptable that the asylum, abrogated by the military junta 22 years ago, is now trampled upon by a state and a government considered 'democratic,'" said a statement issued by the student assembly at the Polytechnic school of fine arts. The statement called the police riot "immoral, fascist, and unconstitutional."

A day of rebellion

November 17, a national holiday, is broadly considered here — especially among students and other youth — as a day of resistance. It is a day to protest government and employer policies that seek

to further shift the burden of an economic depression onto the backs of working people and to undermine democratic rights. The General Federation of Greek Students (EFE) organizes a march on November 17 every year.

On that day in 1973 the military regime then in power sent tanks into the Polytechnic and crushed a student rebellion in blood. The students had been occupying the school for four days. Tens of thou-

sands of working people had begun to heed their calls — issued through a radio station built on campus — for a popular uprising to overthrow the junta. Thousands had begun swelling the grounds surrounding the Polytechnic to offer solidarity. The colonels had taken power through a U.S.-backed coup in 1967 aimed at crushing a wave of labor protests. The army stepped down and turned over the government to bourgeois politicians who returned from exile in July 1974, eight months after the Polytechnic uprising.

As November 17 approached this year, several university faculties and a few high schools were under occupation. Students were protesting a new education bill, which the social-democratic government of ailing András Papandreou presented in parliament. The bill opens the door to privatizing college education. Private schools in higher education are prohibited under the current constitution.

Thousands of youth gathered at the Polytechnic from the morning on, crowding around literature tables and forming contingents for the traditional demonstration. In the early evening, the march of tens of thousands set off for the parliament building and then the U.S. embassy. The EFE organized defense of the uni-

versity grounds.

A few hundred youth stayed behind. They went into the school grounds to hold a meeting on "a more militant commemoration of the 1973 uprising," as one of their leaflets put it. Riot police, surrounding the Polytechnic in full regalia, and gangs of thugs associated with the fascist organization Chrisí Avgí (Golden Dawn), began provoking skirmishes with the students and passersby.

tional television began broadcasting images of "Athens burning." A compliant dean eventually ordered the police onto the campus, the first such incursion in 22 years.

Battle for public opinion

By the next morning 504 people had been arrested, in their majority between 14 and 17 years old. Many were beaten while in police custody. The police subsequently laid charges on 126.

"I'm tired of these people destroying everything every so often for no reason," said an airline worker at the Athens international airport, where I work. "It's time the police did something. Don't we have a state here?" It was a typical comment reflecting the headway the government initially made through the media coverage.

Government officials indicated in public statements they would be able to use such views, which dominated public opinion in the days immediately after the cop riot, to deal tougher blows to democratic rights. But things quickly began to unravel.

Television footage of a 16-year-old being beaten bloody after his arrest shocked many people. Discussions at workplaces, schools, and elsewhere turned toward the conduct of the police. "I didn't like the cops before, but I'm not even going to say good morning to one of them any longer after what I saw them do," said one of my co-workers.

The government, however, decided to maintain its tough posture. University professor Giórgos Rousis and well-known actor Vasilis Diamantopoulos were indicted for "publicly praising a criminal act," because of their antigovernment stance during a televised debate. The two pointed to conditions that lead young people to rebel in whatever way they see fit.

These indictments drew widespread criticism. Daily newspapers published statements by several members of parliament, authors and other artists, and well-known lawyers condemning the conduct of the police, the sweeping charges against the students, and the new indictments.

Subsequently, two demonstrations of 300 and 1,000 respectively took place in Athens in December demanding all the charges be dropped.

Messages protesting the railroading of the Polytechnic defendants can be sent to the ambassador at Greek consulates or embassies around the world. They should be addressed to Greek minister of justice Yiannis Potakis.

Natasha Terlexis is an airline worker at the Athens international airport.



High school students demonstrate in Athens December 8. Banner displays demand for a 15 percent raise in funding for public education and says, "Knowledge is not a commodity, it's a right."

"We were drinking coffee" at a shop in a nearby square, Yánnis, a student, told the daily *Víma*. "Then we decided to head toward the Polytechnic to see what was going on. As we got close to the university building, a group of Chrisí Avgí thugs assaulted us. They hurled raw insults and began beating some from our group. The students inside the Polytechnic saw the incident, opened the school door, and we entered to get away."

On the pretext that the youth inside intended to occupy the school, the riot police began to rain tear gas onto the grounds.

"We were meeting in the architecture building to decide what to do," said a student in an interview. "Some thought we should occupy the place in solidarity with the prison occupation in Korydalós taking place at the same time." Inmates there had been protesting overcrowding and other inhuman conditions. "Suddenly tear gas bombs began to drop like rain. We were trapped."

A few dozen individuals inside the Polytechnic who were prepared for a confrontation fell right into the cop provocation. They began throwing petrol bombs at the police and set fires inside the school. Skirmishes went on late into the night. Na-